

SCANS BY L. A. S.



Nerin
E. Gun

*Red
roses
from
Texas*

NERIN E. GUN

Red Roses From Texas

FREDERICK MULLER LIMITED
LONDON

First published in Great Britain in 1964
by Frederick Muller Limited
Printed by Tonbridge Printers Limited,
Peach Hall Works, Tonbridge, Kent



Copyright © Nerin E. Gun, 1964

3937C

"Three times that day in Texas we were greeted with bouquets of the yellow roses of Texas. Only in Dallas they gave me red roses. I remember thinking: How funny—red roses for me."

Mrs JOHN F. KENNEDY

E842
.9
G8
1964
MAIN

Contents

1	Noon Cavalcade in Dallas	11
2	Counting Our Blessings	24
3	'Join The Marines – They will make a Man out of You!'	38
4	It is the Fashion to Hate . . .	53
5	He didn't like the 'Sardine Can'	67
6	The Promoter	85
7	The Chatelaine	100
8	'They're Going to Kill Us All!'	110
9	'Si Vivis, Ego Te Absolvo'	121
10	'Mummy, Why isn't there any Mickey Mouse on the Television?'	132
11	A Bad Tipper	147
12	Anatomy of the Accused	161
13	'I could stay here for ever'	178
14	The Devil's Advocate	192

Illustrations

The fateful visit to Dallas begins . . .	<i>facing page</i> 32
The assassination	33
Dallas police guard the building believed to house the assassin	48
A plain-clothes officer carries the high-powered rifle used to kill the President	48
Detective Bill Walthers pictured retrieving what the author believes was the fourth bullet	49
Robert and Jacqueline Kennedy watch as the President's body returns to Washington; Mrs Kennedy witnesses the swearing in of the new President, Lyndon Johnson	80
The arrest of Lee Harvey Oswald	81
No. 1 suspect Lee Oswald, his mother and wife, Marina	96
The moment of death for Lee Oswald	97
The President's casket is carried at the beginning of its journey to Washington's St Matthew's Cathedral; the procession leaves the Capitol	128
The new President, Lyndon Johnson, and his wife leave the Mass at St Matthew's Cathedral	129
The Kennedy family attend the funeral of the late President	144
Mrs Kennedy at the graveside in the Arlington National Cemetery	145

The copyrights to the photographs included in the book are held by the following and we extend our grateful thanks to them for kindly lending the photographs to us: William Allen; The Associated Press; Bob Jackson; Eamon Kennedy; The *New York Daily News*; Cecil Stoughton of the White House; Dr Erik Wiget.

CHAPTER ONE

Noon Cavalcade in Dallas

THE PITILESS GLARE of the Texan sun was making Jacqueline Kennedy very uncomfortable, but she dared not put on her blue-tinted sunglasses; she must keep on waving and smiling at the crowds cheering along both sides of the route.

It was a joy-day in Dallas. The enthusiasm of the townsfolk had surprised all those in the procession. John Fitzgerald Kennedy, seated on the right of the huge blue Lincoln-Continental bearing the number-plate GG-300 of the Columbia district, was thoroughly enjoying it all. He kept turning from right to left, and back again, waving and beaming that wide presidential smile.

He had been warned to expect something quite different from this from the hair-trigger-tempered Texans. He had been told that they would spit in his face – as had happened a few weeks before to Adlai Stevenson. This was, after all, the domain of his bitter rival, Senator Barry Goldwater, who wanted to turn back the clock to the days of King George III.

Yet now he was being received with acclamation, “Howdy Jack” and “Viva Jacuelina” resounding on every side, received yet more warmly than in Paris, Mexico or even Berlin. The very weather had changed for him; despite the warnings of last evening’s papers, which had forecast rain and mist. The temperature was 85° F in the shade. It was Friday, November 22nd, 1963.

The presidential procession was preceded only by motor-cycle outriders from the local police. They had been ordered not to use their sirens at all, perhaps so that the cheers of the crowd, expected to be far less warm, should be heard to the full.

At midday, the procession arrived at the centre of Dallas, that wide-spreading town – in Texas everything and everybody is larger than anywhere else – whose real population centre is relatively tiny. There is just the one principal road, Main Street, reflected in several parallel byways.

President Kennedy glanced at the small whitewashed building, pseudo-Spanish in style, standing at the sharp corner where Harwood Street turns into Main Street. This was the City Hall, whose basement houses the police headquarters. From a window of his office on the third floor, District Attorney Wade was watching the passing of the cavalcade. Just above him was the detention centre for “his” suspects.

ON THE two bucket-seats of the special Lincoln, opposite the President and Mrs Kennedy, were John Connally, also on the right, and his wife Nellie. Connally is the Governor of Texas, and a loyal supporter of the President – whose Navy Minister he had been not long previously.

The original plan had been for the Texas Senator, Ralph Yarborough, to have the honour of travelling with the presidential couple. Yarborough is the leader of the Texan liberals, and was at the time making things difficult all round because of the presence of Vice-President Johnson, whom he considered a rival. In fact, he had obstinately and persistently refused to sit beside Lyndon Johnson, calling him “the sleeping mummy”; and Kennedy, who had come to Texas in order to re-unite the party there, tried to smooth him down by offering him a place in his own car. But that morning Yarborough’s ill-humour seemed to have

vanished like the fog and mists of the previous evening. Smiling and shaking hands, he got willingly into the Johnsons’ car.

THE JOHNSONS’ car was the third in the procession, being preceded by the “Queen Mary” – the Secret Service men’s shuttered vehicle, with officers armed with sub-machine-guns on the running-boards. Some of these faced forward, and others back towards Johnson, an added precaution since for obvious reasons the President and Vice-President should never travel together.

“But here in Texas,” grumbled Winson G. Lawson, head of the presidential bodyguard, “nobody listens to reason.” At his side, but outside the car, standing balanced upon the left running-board, was special agent Clint Hill, complaining of the great heat, and that he was hungry.

The press car was further back. The reporters were also hungry, and still more thirsty. They were wondering whether they would be able to get some Scotch at the Trade Mart, their destination, while the banquet was going on.

Dallas is a “dry” town, where alcohol cannot be bought in a public bar; you have to belong to a club, or buy a bottle and take it back to your hotel room to drink. Fortunately, a colleague on the *Dallas Times* had passed round some booklets of vouchers authorising the purchase of drinks at the Press Club premises. So from time to time one of the journalists stopped the press bus, leaving the procession and making tracks for the Press Club.

Rear-Admiral George Buckley, the President’s doctor, dozed in the last car of all, far away from the Kennedys. These affairs tired him out, and he had not properly digested his hotel breakfast.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY smiled across at a dark, well-built woman who was applauding spiritedly. This was

Antionietta Stella, prima donna of the Dallas Opera, who had interrupted rehearsals for *Ballo in Maschera*, soon to have a gala first night, because she wished to see Kennedy.

Then, for a moment forgetting the crowds, the President studied the bunting strung from building to building, prettily transforming the appearance of Main Street. These decorations were not for him; the silver angels with gilded wings and red-and-white plastic Santa Clauses, hand-in-hand were part of the traditional display which every self-respecting American town puts on as Christmas draws near. Certainly, December 25th was still far off – but in Dallas, the town of the newly-rich, where everyone is extremely rich, they always start well ahead of “the rest”.

John Kennedy must have thought then of the presents he would take back to his children when he returned home on Monday. It would be a special occasion. John-John (as he lovingly called him, disliking the bourgeois term “junior”) would be three years old on that day. And Caroline, the charming, impudent “big girl”, would be six on Wednesday. That very morning, the President had been given an enormous cowboy hat; he could imagine John-John’s joy when he took it back to him . . . Would there be time to buy something else as well?

AT THE Trade Mart – a sort of exhibition hall – hundreds of the town’s leading citizens had begun their meal, expecting to hear Kennedy’s speech at dessert. The text had already been distributed in advance to the journalists present by a White House *aide*. The guests had paid a hundred dollars a head for the privilege of being there. For this, they were served great wedges of Kansas steak and baked potatoes Idaho. The Reverend J. A. Schumacher, of the Dallas diocese, had granted a special dispensation for the day, although a Friday, so that his Catholic

flock could eat their steaks in the President’s honour.

David Miller, a seventeen-year-old cashier at a nearby supermarket, had finished work, and taken along his new instantprint camera, meaning to use it this same afternoon for the first time. He saw the procession near the Neiman-Marcus crossing, but decided to take his pictures further along, where it was more open, with no skyscrapers to shadow his subject. There was plenty of time, since the procession was moving forward at only about fifteen miles an hour, and now and then coming to a standstill.

ALL DALLAS seemed to be on the street: the schoolchildren waving flags, mostly Confederate ones, true, but what did that matter? Shirt-sleeved men cried “Hooray”. Confetti poured from the windows. The police looked on smiling, not interfering as people swarmed all over the footpaths to get nearer the presidential car. They looked rather as if they had stepped out of a John Ford film, these Dallas policemen, in their gold-embroidered grey uniform, with huge stetsons pulled down over their eyes, revolvers inlaid with silver and belts dotted with semi-precious stones.

Yes, all Dallas was out on the street – except, perhaps, for the duty editorial staff of the *Dallas News*, preparing the evening edition. Obviously they hadn’t too much to do: the speech had already gone to press, with an account of the visit written up in advance, and a photo of the arrival at the airport already in place above six columns of “copy” on the front page. The unexpected apart, all was ready. In any case, the Friday evening edition was always rather routine – people don’t read much on a Saturday, day of odd-jobs and departures for the week-end.

TONI ZOPPI, editor of the show business page, had a visitor, a certain Jack Ruby, who came in to talk about his

club, the *Carousel*. He seemed quite unconcerned with what was going on in the town.

Sidney Marcus, boss of Nieman-Marcus, the most exclusive store in Texas, certainly in America, perhaps in the world, was waiting on the main entrance steps. He was wondering whether Jacqueline Kennedy would find time to come and buy something there. Thank goodness, the store did not need the publicity – petrol millionaires queue up to get in – but to have as a customer a First Lady renowned for her elegant good taste would certainly do no harm.

A remarkable shop, this Nieman-Marcus: and everyone in the procession instinctively looked into its windows, as they drew level. Perhaps they recalled the story of the Texan blessed by the Oil-gods who came to Marcus one morning, a few days before Christmas, and declared:

"I'll buy all the window-displays as they stand. Just shift the lot to my ranch, around my wife's window – it's my Christmas present to her."

The story is true. True, too, the one about the farmwife who came to the store bare-footed. She made purchases right and left, to the value of hundreds of thousands of dollars, and finally bought one pair of shoes, which she put on on the spot.

"But – forgive me, Madame – why did you come bare-footed?"

"They only struck oil on our land the day before yesterday. I've never had any shoes in my life before."

At Nieman, Marcus they sell more mink coats than anywhere else in America, and that in a region where it is almost always tremendously hot. They have a Bargain Counter with a minimum price of ten thousand dollars. The sugar in the sugar-bowls of the restaurant is sea-blue, to match the walls. For eight thousand dollars you can buy a ready-made library. Or Marcus will choose a collection

of Picassos or Bracques for you, and send a professor to instruct you in the rudiments of the history of art . . . Or hire guests for your daughter's wedding . . .

Nieman, Marcus is the pride of Dallas, as Dallas is the pride of Texas.

THE "SNOBS" who live there claim that Dallas is the Paris of the oil-millionaires. But the Chamber of Commerce frowns upon any such comparison. For ninety per cent of the town's 634,462 inhabitants have never in their lives heard of Paris – unless you mean the village of that name about a hundred miles away to the east, lost in the great Texan plains.

Dallas is a smart city, whimsically and artificially constructed in the desert. It sparkles like one of those shining cars all over chrome, in brilliant colours, with push-button conversion, radio, pick-up and bar, abandoned in a sand-dune. It is a metropolis not only because it has a theatre and occasional opera (very rare things in the Far West), and a fine university, but above all because it is the capital for cotton, banking and oil.

Dallas is a fabulous city, with homes where the kitchen taps run not only with cold and hot water, and iced water, but also with foaming wine on demand. It has a building whose tenants can watch what goes on in the vestibule and corridors through closed-circuit colour television. It has a sixteen-lane motorway, the biggest in the world. Biggest in the world, too, is its motel, where the waitresses are dressed as slaves of ancient Rome, and serve their customers on terraces decorated like those of the Palace of the Caesars.

Dallas owes its name to one of the most obscure vice-presidents of the United States, a Philadelphian who served under Polk. It has an airport where the public move from one counter to another by means of a moving pavement. It has the most luxurious villas of the continent – John

Murcheson's is as big as the White House, and in Dallas lives H. L. Hunt, whose income is \$150,000 a day. Dallas is also very proud of its District Attorney, Henry Wade, who has the reputation of being infallible: out of twenty-four accused persons for capital offences, he has sent twenty-two to the electric chair.

DOUGLAS KIKER, special correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, was wondering if the press car would arrive at its destination in time to allow him to telephone to his office: it was now a quarter past twelve.

He had decided to write a piece about Jacqueline. That day she was radiant. Such, at least, was Kiker's impression as he watched her smiling, slightly waving a hand, making remarks to her husband which seemed to amuse him. Her strawberry-pink wool dress suited her like a dream, her pill-box hat was of the same colour and Chanel could be proud of her.

Ordinarily, Jacqueline dislikes hats; so much so, that on one occasion she received a petition from a national delegation of despairing milliners. But on this particular day she wanted to please the local matrons. For all its dreams of grandeur, Dallas is still only a provincial city, and in America provincial ladies consider the hat indispensable – as much for themselves as for a general in uniform. They wear hats to go shopping, while taking tea, at church and at concerts. Even at the office, they work with hats on their heads . . .

The President was obviously delighted with his wife at that moment, proud of her charm, her elegance, her popularity . . . He knew that Jacqueline was his greatest electoral asset, and was the first to say so. That morning, while speaking to the crowd assembled before his hotel at Fort Worth, he had explained why he had come out alone:

"Mrs Kennedy's still getting ready . . . She takes a bit longer than we do, but then she's a lot better-looking!"

They had been married exactly ten years, two months and ten days, give or take a minute or so, at that moment when the car drew near to Houston Street, a road running along the South side of the rectangle regarded as the "downtown" of Dallas – the centre of the city. Madge Yaltin, an employee of the Survey Department, remarked to her friend Julie Tarati:

"You'd think they were on honeymoon!"

Even the hardened pressmen were astonished to see Jacqueline Kennedy so gay, so lively, so very much the "politician's wife". At the start of the journey, when Andrew Hatcher, the negro Assistant Press Secretary, had announced that Mrs Kennedy would be there, there had been some sarcastic comments.

The First Lady hated electoral tours; she had kept out of electioneering since the presidential nomination and candidature. But today she was more the "professional" than even the party diehards. She was in her element.

It was twenty seven minutes past twelve.

Detective Buddy Walthers was on the corner of Main and Houston Streets when the presidential Lincoln passed, turning right close up to the pavement. Walthers was not on duty. One of the County Sheriff's men, who had no responsibility at all for public order in the town, he had just come to see the show. But from time to time he looked towards the provincial lock-up on the top three floors of the building there, where many of the prisoners had been given permission to look out of the windows.

To be precise, it should be said that there were two buildings under the Sheriff's jurisdiction. One, on the opposite side of the road, on the left, looked like an old deserted castle. Here were the court-house, the Records Department and certain administrative offices. Sheriff

Decker's offices, and the prison, were in the new building on the right.

The presidential procession had little more than a hundred yards to go along Houston Street before making yet another turn, sharp left into Elm Street.

Just in front of the Sheriff's offices was a kind of monument, apparently copied from the Joliette of the Schoenbrunn Palace at Vienna, its centre-piece a statue of Sam Houston, the Texan hero. Beyond were green lawns haphazardly but efficiently criss-crossed by roads leading into the Stemmons motorway, which cuts Dallas in two. Once on this motorway, the procession would pick up speed and arrive within a few minutes at the Trade Mart, just a few miles further on. Further still, again at the right of the motorway, was the Parkland Municipal Hospital.

There were almost no more police left along Elm Street; James M. Chaney, the motorcyclist preceding the presidential car by a few yards noted that here the crowd was much less dense, and mainly consisted of negroes.

The negroes rather looked upon Kennedy as their champion, but had preferred to group together here, apart from the whites. At Dallas, despite a seeming veneer of liberalisation, racial barriers remain firm.

PHOTOGRAPHER JACKSON, of the Dallas *Times Herald*, was trying to get a reflection of Kennedy in the water of a small rectangular pool lying between the statue in the centre and the Elm Street crossing. Suddenly he realised that he had used up his film, and began to re-charge his camera.

The pool also reflected the image of a big yellow building topped by a huge neon sign. In the water, the building seemed to have something graceful about it, but in fact it was horribly ugly – a cubic structure with dead-level windows, stark in these semi-rural surroundings, an outrage to its idyllic setting of lawns and gardens. This was the

Texas Book Depository Building, headquarters of a private firm supplying the State's schools with text-books, exercise books and atlases. The top floors had been turned into a warehouse.

NEARLY ALL the employees were at the windows: on the fourth floor, at the right, were Ralph Erwing and Washington Harris, two negroes very excited at the thought of seeing the President for the first time in their lives. The windows of the floor above were deserted. One was half-open; on the sill was a cardboard box, left there no doubt by a thoughtless employee.

Roy S. Truly, the manager, was outside the door facing the junction of Houston and Elm Streets. He was talking to a friend, a certain Abraham Zapruder, proprietor of "Jennifer Junior", a gown shop nearby. Zapruder was an economical person. He was explaining to Truly that while he wanted to film Kennedy's passing, he wanted to use up as little film as possible.

"Kodachrome costs money – four dollars for twenty-five feet – and the camera eats it up. I'll get Kennedy just as he passes . . ."

He decided upon a more favourable angle, and went twenty yards or so further on, to the platform in front of a little arcade overlooking the grassed area towards Elm Street. There he was right in the middle, between the cross-roads and the bridge over the motorway. There was no-one in front of him, and on the opposite side of the road only a few sightseers sitting on the grass as if for a picnic.

AT TWELVE-THIRTY (one-thirty Washington time) Caroline and John were sleeping peacefully in their separate rooms on the second floor of the East Wing of the White House. Usually John was troublesome, but today he had been very good when the time came for their afternoon rest.

He had been promised that when he woke up he could watch his parents' arrival at Austin, the Texan capital, on the television. Their stop at Dallas had not been considered important enough to be televised as a whole.

For the first time in his life "John-John" had not cried when his father left on the previous day. But he had watched silently, and then asked sadly: "Why does Daddy always leave me alone?"

It was twelve-thirty exactly as the blue Lincoln turned the corner. David Miller took his photograph, but having noted that just at that moment Kennedy and his wife were looking the opposite way, he decided to run round the Texas Book Depository Building in order to get another picture when the car reached the motorway.

Secret Service man Clint Hill looked attentively ahead, towards the bridge, beneath which the procession must shortly pass. There were three or four people on it, and Secret Service men are always wary of bridges and balconies.

Kennedy, too, was looking towards this bridge, and beyond it, at the silhouettes of several sun-gilded skyscrapers in the direction of Oak Cliff – regarded as one of the town's more proletarian suburbs.

The chauffeur slowed down again, enabling the tailor-turned-film-man Zapruder to get a better picture.

It was twelve-thirty and fifty-five seconds.

It was then that Nellie Connally, still clutching her bouquet of pale yellow roses, turned to Kennedy and exclaimed triumphantly:

"What a reception, Mr President! You can never say after this that they don't love you in Dallas . . ."

THE FEW seconds which followed will last an eternity in the

history of the United States. The chain of events then about to unfold would have such consequences as to be like an earthquake to all America, and therefore to the rest of the world – since nothing important could happen there without the whole world necessarily being affected.

Yet despite the huge crowds, despite the presence of forty-six Secret Service men, of policemen, officials, journalists, the County detectives at the window of the prison opposite, and of the thousands of cameras of every make and all sizes, there was to be not one single real witness to what happened.

This was a country the smallest phases of whose existence are televised night and day, where photographers worm their way into the most private sectors of the lives of important people, where technology is so advanced that one can photograph the planets electronically, see in the dark, and transmit sound and pictures from continent to continent by means of mirrors floating in space. Yet, in that same country, by a strange irony of Fate, there was to be no single really concrete documentation of the most significant happening of the century. Apart from the blurred snaps of a few amateurs, nothing.

All the world was there, but nobody saw a thing, on that fatal day of November 22nd, 1963, at twelve thirty-one, American continental time.

CHAPTER TWO

Counting Our Blessings

ON THAT FATEFUL Friday, a drama was being enacted in several different places at once, as if on a revolving stage. It began under a fine rain at Fort Worth.

It was a little after midnight when the Kennedys entered their apartment at the Texas Hotel.

They had not been given the most expensive quarters – No. 1348, called the Will Rogers Suite, after the old Hollywood actor, an idol of a former generation – because the Secret Service had objected that it had several different access doors. It was the Johnsons who had to occupy it, to the great annoyance of Lady Bird, who, as a good economical housekeeper, did not see why she should pay \$100 the night while the President himself paid only \$75.

This was the price of apartment No. 850, on the eighth floor, which had only one access door (guarded by a pair of Secret Service men and a City policeman), despite its two bedrooms, sitting-room and three bathrooms.

The apartment had recently been decorated in “modern oriental” style, with very low couches covered in gold brocade, standing out from walls covered in blue silk paper. In addition, Mrs J. Lee Johnson III, a lady prominent in Fort Worth “aristocracy”, had turned the place into an art gallery by installing thirty or so pictures, from Rembrandts

to Picassos, and some pieces of sculpture and pottery from her own collection and those of other local notables. In each room she had put huge bouquets of yellow roses, the national flower of Texas.

THE FIRST lady was, in any case, too worn out that night to examine her little temporary museum. She had been standing almost all day, since at 1.31 p.m. she had left the blue and white Boeing 707 presidential jet at San Antonio airport. A wonderful day, certainly . . . there had been 100,000 people, according to the mayor, to welcome them. And at Houston, twice as many.

Jacqueline made a little speech in Spanish at a gathering at the Rice Hotel:

“Estoy muy contenta de estar en el gran estado de Texas.”

All those present, most of Mexican origin, gave her a wild ovation. The “*mariachi*” (itinerant musicians) yelled “The Yellow Rose” in her honour, and some cried “*Olé*” as if at a bullfight.

There was a short stop at the Centre for Space Medicine at Brooks Base; then on to arrive at Fort Worth, illuminated with small yellow lamps in their honour.

Now Jacqueline was dropping with sleep, and with a tender goodnight went to her room.

THE PRESIDENT was also tired, and had to be up very early in the morning for his last and most taxing day of the Texan tour. But he wanted first to listen to the local television news, to hear what was said of his visit; and since there was still another ten minutes to go before the news bulletin, he looked through a copy of *Life* magazine.

A prominent illustrated article caught his attention. Splashed across several pages was a series of pictures and photographs of the time, showing the funeral ceremonies of King Edward VII of England. Here were almost all the

rulers of the earth, following the coffin of the sovereign best remembered as the architect of the "entente cordiale". Wilhelm II, in the glittering uniform of the Grenadier Guards, his famous moustaches pointing aggressively upward, rode beside England's new King, George V. They headed a showy parade of uniforms, decorations and jewels from seven other kings, five Crown Princes, forty princes of the blood, seven queens and a multitude of diplomats representing seventy nations of the world.

"Never again could this grandiose spectacle of May 1910 be repeated," thought Kennedy. "Our modern world is too realistic to waste time over one man's funeral." The President smiled as he saw that the United States representative was one of the last in the cortège: ex-president Theodore Roosevelt, ill at ease in his tight frock-coat . . . The United States hadn't counted for much in those days.

The article which so caught Kennedy's attention was inspired by a bedside book of his, *August 1914* by Barbara W. Tuchman. Kennedy had given copies of it to his friends; the British Prime Minister, Macmillan, had received one on his last visit. Kennedy was particularly struck, in this book, by the way in which a whim of Fate can overturn the world. 1914 was a Golden Age in Europe — but it had needed no more than a few pistol-shots from an unknown at Sarajevo to change everything, destroy everything, wipe it all out.

Kennedy remembered what he had said to Senator Mike Mansfield, head of the Democrat majority in the Senate, before leaving Washington:

"I am very worried about Romulo Bethancourt" (the Venezuelan President). "These Venezuelans are mad. They're capable of shooting him and in a few seconds reducing the country to nothing . . ."

The United States, certainly, was not a turbulent nation

like Venezuela. Still you would have had to go a long way back to find a day which began as serenely as that November 22nd.

JOE BROWN, his wife and their seven children were waiting at that moment, some minutes after one in the morning, for their train at Pennsylvania Station, New York. They had to get to Vermont, to spend the holiday with the rest of the family.

Although so late, the station was full of travellers, for this was the beginning of the great exodus of the long weekend of "Thanksgiving". This takes place on the last Thursday in November, and is the most American of all festivals, since on that day everyone, without distinction of religion, origin or race, stays at home to give thanks to Providence. The tradition stems from the pioneers who debarked at Plymouth more than three centuries ago. Like them, one eats a turkey dinner and "counts one's blessings".

THE NATION had plenty for which to give thanks: it was only necessary to look through the newspapers bearing tomorrow's date, but already on sale in the big towns, to see that. The papers were all very thick, with lots of advertising; gigantic Christmas sales were expected.

The *Queen Elizabeth* had weighed anchor with a record number of passengers on board, and that day more than thirty other ships were to take 22,000 Americans on holiday cruises to the four corners of the world.

The *Daily News*, the best-selling American newspaper, with a 4,000,000 circulation, announced on the front page that Zsa Zsa Gabor had been robbed, but that the police had recovered part of the booty. But the day's big news, at any rate for those interested in criminal cases, was that of the Minneapolis lawyer, Gene Thompson, accused of having procured the murder of his wife, Carol. The affair

fascinated the public because of the extraordinary details revealed by the prosecution. Thompson had hired the services of a killer, and the conspiracy showed marked resemblance to one uncovered by the Italian police when the wife of a Milanese business man was murdered in Rome.

That night, an entirely new edition of *Who's Who in Café Society* went on sale, edited by Cleveland Armory. For the first time, alongside those of the negro leader Dr Martin Luther King and the inevitable Elizabeth Taylor, it contained the name of Caroline Kennedy.

That night, at Springfield, in the Federal prison, died Robert Stroud, known to the world as "The Bird-Man of Alcatraz", the Dr Faria of "The Rock" in San Francisco Bay; the old man, kept in solitary confinement since 1910, knew how to talk to the birds.

In the big stores, Father Christmas costumes were being given out to the men who for the next month would spend all their time taking kiddies on their knee to hear what they wanted for Christmas.

At the Central Post Office in Washington the postal code number 25000 had been given to Father Christmas, who was already receiving the first hundreds of the some half a million letters which would be addressed to him by American children. That year, progress was making itself felt everywhere. An electronic brain would reply to the letters – which was the reason for the announcement that it wouldn't do any longer for the young ones to address them to Santa at the North Pole, but must put the ZIP-Code number 25000 on the envelope instead.

In Seattle, they had just finished installing in a shop-window another electronic machine; this one told parents instantly what they should buy for their children's presents.

John Henry Faulk, a former radio commentator banned as an alleged Communist sympathiser in the McCarthy era, had his \$3,511,000 in damages reduced to a mere

\$550,000 by the Court of Appeal. But even this limited verdict was a severe setback for the political calumniators; it would have been inconceivable under any other president but Kennedy.

At Harvard University, the members of the student rugby team had gone to bed early; the traditional clash with their rivals of Yale (America's "Oxford-and-Cambridge") would take place on Saturday. Harvard, though usually beaten, wanted to have a brilliant revenge this time, by way of showing their gratitude to their "old boy", Kennedy, who had not only filled the top jobs in his administration with Harvard graduates, but had strictly barred those of Yale.

Nonetheless, there was one member of Yale University with a very personal reason to be grateful to the President at that moment. At a few minutes after midnight, he entered his apartment on the eleventh floor of 100, York Avenue, at New Haven.

Despite the presence of an armed policeman sent by the State Department, all was quiet in that university residence. Professor Frederick C. Barghoorn had come in late, and tired out – but happy to be there, and not in the narrow little cell 87, at the Lubyanka Prison in Moscow.

The professor, an expert in Soviet social problems, had been arrested in Moscow, for no apparent good reason – while leaving the American Embassy, where he had been for cocktails – and accused of espionage. Without the very energetic intervention of Kennedy, who made immediate representations to the Kremlin, Barghoorn would probably still be confined in the celebrated fortress of Catherine II, cut off from the rest of the world.

Kruschev had freed him in order to please Kennedy, and that victory was perhaps the American President's most personal and most human diplomatic triumph. The time had gone by when whole fleets were sent to secure the

safety of a single citizen; yet Kennedy had achieved something similar for an unknown pedagogue.

YES, KENNEDY could be proud that night, listening to the latest news about Barghoorn on the television. Yale University had organised a meeting in the President's honour by way of showing their gratitude.

ANOTHER INTELLECTUAL was awake late that night. He was working in his studio at Princeton University on a speech which he was to deliver a few days later, at the presentation of the Enrico Fermi Prize, at the White House. Dr J. Robert Oppenheimer, one of the scientists to whom America owes her atomic superiority, had been barred from the programme under the Eisenhower Administration as "a risk". But Kennedy, showing great political courage, was going to receive him publicly and give him the \$50,000 prize, whose symbolical value was probably a hundred times greater.

AT THE United Nations a resolution had been passed with acclamation, proclaiming "the year of international co-operation".

The world's day was beginning peacefully. Certainly, the Soviets had brought down an Iranian plane, but as their president, Brezhnev, was at that moment the guest of the Shah, the incident did not seem grave.

Premier Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia had renounced American economic aid. Far from irritating public opinion, this had caused some amusement in Washington: at last the head of a foreign state who was *not* going on begging for dollars.

Nothing new in Viet-Nam.

Erhard, the new German Chancellor, had gone to Paris to pay his respects to General de Gaulle, but it was un-

likely that a new anti-U.S. intrigue was brewing there – hadn't de Gaulle himself announced a visit to Kennedy for next year?

At the Vatican, the Eucumenical Council had just authorised the use of the English language during the sacraments – a little compliment from Rome to the first Catholic president of the United States.

All the newspapers had the photo of an aged Texan, wearing, of course, a ten-gallon hat, and watching two television receivers at once, because just one picture bored him. The aged Texan was John Nance (called "Cactus") Garner, famous in the U.S.A. not only for having been Vice-President under Roosevelt, but for being ninety-five years old. Kennedy had telephoned him this evening. All presidents with an election ahead telephone Garner.

ANOTHER VICE-PRESIDENT was in Texas that night: Richard M. Nixon and his wife, waiting at Dallas airfield for the plane which would take them to New York. It is not exactly known what Nixon (who claimed to be interested only in the Bar, but was most active politically) was doing in Dallas several hours before Kennedy's arrival. He had made a vague speech there in which he criticised the President's policies; but in Texas he had not much following, the darling of the opposition there being still Senator Barry Goldwater.

Thinking back three years, to the election night of November 1960, it is difficult to realise that this same Nixon only just missed being elected President; a few thousand more votes would have been enough for him to beat Kennedy. A flood which had put out of action a few Democrat villages; a tactical error in Chicago; a few Republican voters who had given up their fishing trips on Election Day in favour of going to vote – and it would have been Nixon who now rode triumphantly into Dallas, and

Kennedy who waited, unnoticed by anyone, on that rustic chair at the airport restaurant.

There was some talk of Dwight Eisenhower having been back to Columbia University, to receive a medal marking the tenth anniversary of the day on which he assumed its presidency. The general was welcomed by a young undergraduate, David Syrett, who once as a child had met him in the road outside the University and offered him a plastic gun. Dwight D. Eisenhower did not talk politics, preferring not to risk his prestige in a battle he believes already lost for the Republicans.

Another president slept, watched over by a nurse, in his vast apartment in the Waldorf-Astoria Towers: Herbert Hoover, despite age and cancer refusing still to give up.

Harry Truman, that night, was awake in his studio on the third floor of his house at Independence, Missouri. He was writing an article for the next day's papers, an article in which he launched an indirect attack upon Kennedy's policy of racial equality.

Macy's, the big New York store, had published an advertisement, splashed across several pages:

"Tomorrow, Friday November 22nd, there's just one thing to do: Buy our bargain-price Whisky. It'll cheer us up – we shall need it."

Another advertisement, by a motion-picture company, announced a new film.

"There are other ways of getting rid of a president than by an election," it proclaimed.

In all the papers appearing that Friday, November 22nd, Paramount published an advertisement in huge type of its film *Seven Days in May*, in which a right-wing fanatic, Burt Lancaster, plots to get rid of the president of the United States, played by Frederic March.

"The president," ran the advertisement, "knew more than 25,000 people – but could trust no more than five."

The fateful visit to Dallas begins as the Kennedys arrive at Love Field airport. *Right*, Vice-President Johnson makes the introductions to Dallas dignitaries while behind the President, Governor Connally helps his wife from the plane. *Below*, Mrs Kennedy holds her red roses



It is strange to note how many films were being made at the time, or had just been released, which had this theme of an attempt on a president's life. Peter Sellers, the celebrated British actor, had played a president threatened by rebels, and in *Fail Safe* the president's life was also in danger. A fantastic plot to kill the president during a Madison Square Garden meeting occurs in *The Manchurian Candidate*.

The Des Moines Television Station that night showed the film *Suddenly*, with Frank Sinatra, as its midnight matinee; an old "B" film, which was probably being shown at the same time by a dozen other stations, and which had been telecast all over America during the previous year. It shows Frank Sinatra as a killer in the pay of conspirators who arrive in a small town where the American president is expected. He shuts himself into a small house overlooking the station and the road down which the presidential procession will pass. He sets up an automatic rifle with telescopic lens at a window . . . but in the film, the Secret Service men intervene in time.

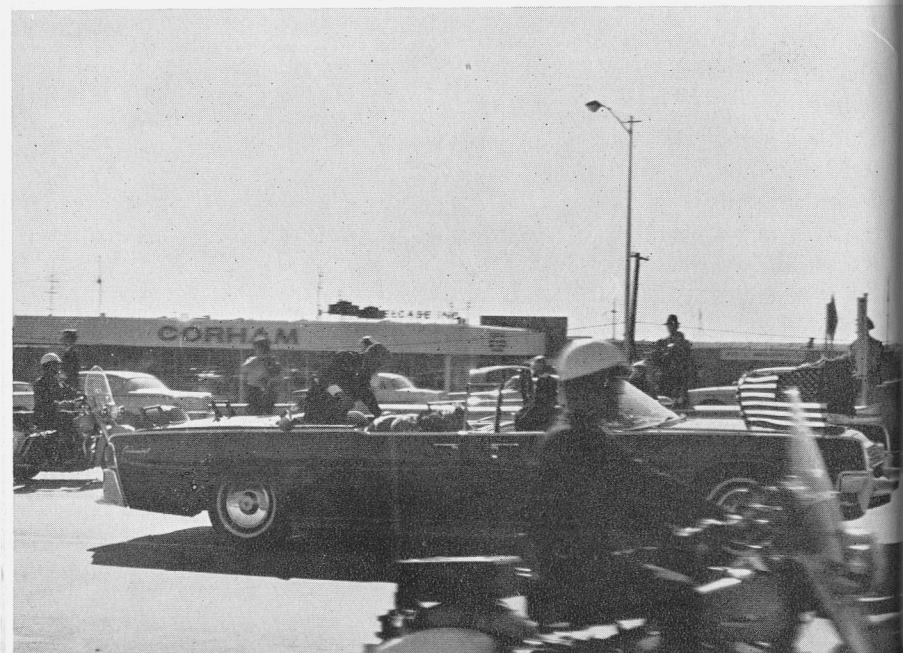
ON BROADWAY, the night's shows were coming to an end. The programmes were rather more cheerful: Charlie Chaplin (no longer banned) in *City Lights*; Walt Disney's charming story, pleasing to both old and young, of the search by two dogs and a siamese cat for their master; Fellini's mystifying *8½*.

Meanwhile, at star level, at Sardi's Restaurant, at the El Morocco and Roma di Notte, all the talk was of who would be lucky enough to be invited to the great reception the Kennedys were to give at the White House for the elite of the film world.

The Kennedys had done a great deal for the theatre. The shows they had been to, *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and *Beyond The Fringe*, had had enormous success. Another, *The Best Man*, a kind of reconstruction of

C

The assassination. Above, Mrs Kennedy helps agent Clint Hill climb into the car. Below, the race to Parkland Hospital



the atmosphere of an electoral campaign, had had an indifferent reception; Kennedy went to see it, and immediately thereafter it was "house full" for months.

By organising the first-ever performances of the ballet at the White House, Jacqueline Kennedy had done much for dancing. It was she who, with her husband, influenced the decision of the Ford Foundation to grant \$20,000,000 to the principal dance schools in America. There was therefore a great crowd that night pouring out after seeing the Mexican Ballet.

At the paybox of the Biltmore Theatre, two steps off from Broadway, hopeful provincials were still being told that *Barefoot in the Park* (with a young actress closely resembling Jacqueline) was sold out until April.

Mary, Mary had been running for three years. There would be a long wait, too, for anyone wanting to see the British revue, *Stop the World, I Want To Get Off*, which Jacqueline had seen with her sister, Princess Radziwill.

Broadway, therefore, had good reason, despite the ever-increasing competition of television, for expecting a record season.

ALTHOUGH IT was half-past one in the morning (New York time being an hour ahead of Texas) the offices of the finance house, Ira Haupt and Co., one of the most important on the stock market, were not in darkness. The firm was facing bankruptcy, to the tune of \$30,000,000, and the Stock Exchange had frozen the accounts of its 20,000 clients. All Wall Street was in a hubbub and share values had fallen sharply by nine points – a fall graver than any since the last great crisis of more than two years before.

Kennedy was unintentionally the cause of this fall. He had delayed the conclusion of an agreement which would have allowed the Soviets to buy large quantities of grain in order to supplement their bad harvests.

The men of Moscow had made it known that they wanted to buy soya oil. A speculator, Anthony de Angelis, president of Allied Crude Oil, had bought up almost all available supplies. To finance the deal (according to the findings of the later enquiry) he borrowed some 90% of the necessary capital from his stockbrokers. In freezing the negotiations, Kennedy had given a shock to the Stock Exchange, and share values fell sharply.

Wall Street could meanwhile have ignored this contretemps, since share values had shown a constant rise since the beginning of the year – from 20 to 35% omitting increases in dividends. The Telephone Company had that very evening announced a doubling of revenue for its two million shareholders. But since the quarrel with Roger Blough, Chairman of the Board of the gigantic U.S. Steel, Wall Street was always a bit suspicious of John F. Kennedy.

The President had deplored this that very afternoon, to a journalist in the aeroplane, while the air-hostess, Jan Tyrell, had been serving their coffee:

"I talked for a long time the other day at Miami to a business man and begged him to understand that I am not 'anti-business' . . . You accuse me of putting obstacles in your way, I told him, and blame it on me each time the Exchange has a tremor . . . but when you make record profits, you don't give me the credit."

BUT THE Stock Exchange was one of the lesser Kennedy worries. The President had every reason, that night, before going to bed, to count his blessings – he too, like every other American.

On his night-table was a little gold plaque, one of a number which he had had engraved to give away to his friends. It was a calendar, the calendar of October 1962. He thought back now to those thirteen days in October,

those of the Cuba crisis. He had saved his country and the world from the horrors of atomic destruction, yet at the same time confirmed his stature as a great President and put Communism on the run. The plaque bore his initials and Jacqueline's, *JFK* and *JBK*, for without his wife at his side he could not have gone through that time.

Since that October of crisis, a year had gone by, a year of many dramatic events which Kennedy had confronted with dignity and flair. He had overcome the Mississippi crisis, kept hold on the Atlantic Alliance, prevented Vietnam from falling into chaos, inspired the historic Negro march on Washington, and stood up against the whims of Congress. Above all, he had concluded the pact ending atomic bomb tests, perhaps the most important diplomatic achievement of post-war years.

Kennedy had hoped to receive the Nobel Prize for that, and was very disappointed to learn that Professor Linus Pauling had been chosen – Pauling, who this very day had left his Californian home to begin the journey to Stockholm for the prize-giving ceremony. Never mind! The Soviets were talking now of closer relations, and of co-operation in Space. The end of the cold war was in sight.

As the young Senator Edmundsen was to say later:

"I don't know why the President needs to make an election tour here. He will be elected with acclamation next November."

He was right. But Kennedy loved the crowds, loved talking to them, loved the fight.

He must also bow to the political rule that every president must give up one year in four of his term of office to his re-election. Perhaps he wanted to get such electoral unanimity that his "dynasty" would thereby be firmly established in American political life.

So it is likely that Kennedy went to sleep that night thinking of his chances of conquering the votes of a reluctant Dallas.

THE NEXT day's horoscope, syndicated in hundreds of American newspapers, read:

Serious political surprises may be expected.

And in Paris, where the newspaper kiosks were already re-opened, there was widely displayed a strange booklet of astrological predictions by Andre Barbault, published by Albin Michel. On page 90 it forecast "for November 1963, the tragic end of the President of the United States."

Had Kennedy read that book, he would only have laughed at it. One of his friends, Stefan Lorent, had remarked to him some days earlier on the evil coincidence that ever since 1840, the president elected in every twentieth year had died in office. Roosevelt, re-elected in 1940, died in office in 1945. Kennedy had replied:

"You'll see. I'll put an end to that superstition."

'Join the Marines—They will make a Man out of You!'

THE SHABBY WOODEN bungalow at 1026 North Beckley, in the Oak Hill quarter — "on the other side of the tracks" — was in darkness. Mrs A. C. Johnson owns that jumble of a house, whose builder must have thought he was constructing a maze, it is so difficult to find your way round.

Mrs Johnson is a very good manager indeed. She has seventeen rooms, let furnished at modest prices. The tenant who on October 14th had taken the small room off the main sitting-room near the entrance paid only \$8 a week — which is reasonable in any country in the world, and above all in Dallas.

The room was no bigger than a railway carriage, some 6ft. by 8ft; with a window (and air-conditioning it is true), a very small, plain bed, and a child's cupboard, white with blue painted flowers — bed and cupboard taking up almost all the available space. Anyway, the tenant had almost no possessions: a small radio and a half-empty suitcase, said Mrs Johnson. The room was too small to hide anything.

The tenant behaved very well, giving no trouble, never asking for anything and paying the rent regularly. What more could Mrs Johnson — who, with her husband, was busy not only with this nice little place but also with a restaurant nearby — have wished for?

The tenant, whose name was O. H. Lee, went regularly to work every morning and returned every evening almost

as regularly at about nine o'clock. He read in his room, or listened to the radio. Sometimes, at midnight, he would go into the big sitting-room for the television news bulletin. But he never made any comment upon it. Lee was a very silent person.

That night, he did not come in at news-time. No-one noticed his absence. Mrs Johnson was at the restaurant, and the housekeeper, Helen Roberts, had other things to do than bother with the tenants.

Some weeks before, an unknown woman had telephoned and asked to speak to a certain "Oswald".

"No-one of that name here — and I'm not a telephonist," Mrs Roberts had snapped, cutting off the caller's protests. Had she been a bit more friendly, she might perhaps have realised that the initials of O. H. Lee were those of this Lee Harvey Oswald — and might have put a spoke in the wheels of destiny . . .

IN THE same district, a quarter of an hour's walk away, lived policeman J. D. Tippitt, who had at last made up his mind to go to bed. When not on duty, he was always at home with his family, helping his wife, Marie.

They owned their own little house, but in theory only, since it was heavily mortgaged. A salary of \$490 was quite insufficient; there was no butter on the bread after the 20th of each month — and Tippitt, who at thirty-nine had served for ten years in the City police, worked on Fridays and Saturdays in a restaurant.

The next day he would be free (he did not have to go to the restaurant until the evening), and had therefore been able to chat at length to his elder son. This was Allen, fourteen years old, whose ambition it was to be an astronaut.

Brenda Kay, ten, was helping her mother wash up; little Curtis Ray, four, had long since been in bed.

"Tippitt? A good guy, a real buddy," his Sergeant said of him. "Never talks about anything except his family . . . They're poor, but they're happy."

Next day was to be a holiday for them, since owing to Kennedy's arrival and the festivities which would follow, the children would not go to school.

JACK RUBY, the proprietor of the *Carousel* Club, had not yet gone home. Despite its pretentious sign, the *Carousel* was nothing but a sleazy bar, where watching the "strip-tease" show the customers bought more and more drinks for the hostesses. Ruby usually stayed at the club until the middle of the last show, about two in the morning, then checked the cash and deposited the evening's takings in the night-safe of a nearby bank.

His real name was Jack Leon Rubinstein, but he had shortened it. Either because that is often done in America, or because in Dallas, despite the presence of a strong and prosperous Jewish minority, anti-semitism is latent – and in Ruby's *métier* one cannot afford the luxury of making enemies for non-commercial reasons.

Ruby was very popular with everybody, as a night-club proprietor must be – above all with the police. The Headquarters men, and those of the Sheriff's office, often came in. They ate and drank free, joked with the girls, and went off again without so much as leaving a tip for the waiter, but giving "Jack, my pal" a friendly tap on the shoulder in passing. That was "business" too; in dry Texas, where alcohol is sold in clubs, you have obviously to keep in with the police.

Jack Ruby gave himself "little Al Capone of Dallas" airs, believed he resembled "Scarface", and dressed to imitate him. He was born obscurely in the ghetto of Chicago's West Side. The word *ghetto* is not a metaphor here: every big American city has its ghetto, where the Jewish poor herd

together by choice, and they continue to be given that name. His father, Joseph, a building contractor, brought him up very strictly, together with his three brothers and four sisters.

But Ruby early detached himself from the family; at fifteen he was already well known in Chicago's underworld, selling tickets for sporting events and acting as bookie's runner.

He became one of the characters of the "Loop" (the city's Soho). They called him "Sparky", because although he never seemed to have any money he always managed to be flashily dressed. The Chicago police did not take him very seriously. Once he tried to get into a boxing match without paying, was severely beaten and has ever since carried a steel plate in his skull. Later, Rubinstein became a commercial traveller in cruets; then organised the more or less shady activities of a syndicate of road-sweepers.

Ruby left Chicago for San Francisco, where during the lean years of the Depression he tried to make his way in that jumble of dance-halls, houses of assignation, nude shows and sleazy dives which is the "Barbary Coast". But the native gangsters chased him off.

He went back to Chicago, and timidly and unnoticed frequented the violent world of Tony Accardo, Partin Ochs and Paul "No-Nose" Labriola. He offered to "tell all" to Kefauver's Senate Committee, which was enquiring into crime in the United States. Washington laughed at him; humiliated, Ruby in 1952 agreed to his sister, Eve Grant's, suggestion that he should take over the management of a bar which she had inherited.

In Dallas Jack Ruby found fortune. He at once became "the Chicago cowboy", looked on by everyone as a tourist sight. He bought another bar, then the *Carousel*, and despite five recorded arrests seems never to have paid the smallest penalty.

"Really, he was never interested in politics," said his best strip-tease artiste, Jada Conforto, a red-head of twenty-seven. "And I didn't think he could hurt a fly. He could never make up his mind."

THAT NIGHT, Ruby returned late to his apartment. He had three rooms in the Marsala Building, 233 Erwing Street. The rent was only \$125, but Ruby, always careful with money, shared it with a postcard seller, George Senator.

They had been friends for a long time, and Senator thought him a "regular guy, good-hearted, with a code of his own – not everybody's, but still a code."

Ruby was a bachelor, and gave all his love to his basset-hound, a chestnut-coloured dog called Schatzi. Neither Senator, nor his staff at the club, nor the police knew that he also had a revolver.

THE WOMAN who had so unseasonably telephoned the rooming-house at Beckley Street was a pleasant blonde, very tall and well-built, of Russian origin (like her husband) and professing the Quaker faith.

"Oswald reproached me very much for that telephone call," Mrs Ruth Paine said later. "Then he calmed down when I explained that his wife, who was pregnant, wasn't well and needed him. Sure, I ought to have been alarmed by this business of the false name. But I knew how much trouble he'd had to get work in Dallas, with his past. And it isn't a crime in the United States to go under an alias."

How had it come about that this quiet middleclass woman – living at Irving, a small village some ten miles from Dallas, and whose husband Michael worked in the Bell factory making helicopters – should know Oswald?

It's an odd story.

Mrs Paine studied Russian at St Marks School in Dallas, and never missed a chance of perfecting herself in

the language. She was born in New York, but grew up in Philadelphia, and had lived at Dallas for only four years.

She mixed a great deal with White Russians, and militant anti-Communists who also wanted – in order to pursue their activities – to increase their knowledge of Russian.

In Dallas, everyone is anti-Communist in the same way that at the Vatican everyone is Catholic.

One day, a chemist invited her to a small cocktail party.

"We're expecting a man called Oswald, who has lived in Russia and came back disillusioned about ten months ago. His wife is also Russian, born during the Stalin era. To her, America must be like fairyland."

Ruth Paine was to say later that Oswald made a very bad impression on her:

"Obstinate, violent, always arguing . . ." But Marina, the young Russian, was charming, gentle, eager to please, always talking about her little girl, June Lee.

"We got on together like sisters, and as her husband had not taught her English she was a valuable teacher, since we always talked Russian together."

The White Russians and other refugees from Communist persecution were to confirm that Oswald was an impossible person, and that he treated his young and lovely wife very badly indeed. He hit her, did not buy milk for the child, and treated her like a servant. Marina was to admit that he did not make love to her more than once every two months or so. But Marina loved him, and a woman in love puts up with everything.

They say that she did try two or three times to leave him, and even thought of asking the help of the Soviet embassy. But she did not dare, believing herself too deeply compromised in the eyes of Moscow because of the friends she had made in Dallas and because of her marriage.

Ruth Paine often visited Marina, but believed that the

couple got on well together. Then, one morning in April, she found the young Russian in tears.

"Lee has lost his job, and here I am pregnant . . ." Oswald had been working for six months at Jaggers, Chiles and Stowall, a photo-engraving firm.

The official reason, as given by Robert Stowall, its head, was:

"He made no progress at all as a specialist printer in the photographic lab."

The true reason was quite different. The other workers were indignant at seeing Oswald reading a copy of the *Daily Worker*, organ of the American Communist Party, while eating his lunch. They insisted on his dismissal.

Mrs Paine, who lived apart from her husband, took pity on them and offered to shelter Marina and little June while Oswald went to New Orleans, his native town, to look for work.

The real life-story of Lee Harvey Oswald will not be revealed for some time, when the "Secret" stamp is removed from his dossier. Perhaps even then the whole truth will not be known about him – his past, his ideas, his plans.

Yes, there are hundreds and hundreds of witnesses; but the human memory is not an electronic brain which records every detail passively and objectively. Unconsciously, people remember only what is derogatory to him.

What is certain is that apart from his wife, whom he loved, Oswald had not a single friend in the world. It may therefore never be known with certainty if he really was the central figure of that fatal Friday, November 22nd; or simply the victim of a freak of destiny.

However that may be, he now belongs to history, and we shall try to give a true picture of that strange man who had all his life been a rebel – a rebel without a cause.

LEE HARVEY OSWALD was born on October 18th, 1939 in New Orleans, city of jazz, slaves and carnival. His father, an insurance agent, had died a few months before.

His mother, Marguerite Oswald, who today lives on the outskirts of Fort Worth, at 2200 Thomas Place, where she works as a living-in nurse, was in her second marriage. She had had one child of her first husband, John Edward Pic, now a regular officer in the American Air Force. Lee had an elder brother, Robert, who today has his own family, and works near Dallas as a brick merchant.

Trouble was the lot of the Oswalds.

At the age of three, little Lee and his brothers were placed in a Lutheran institution.

The mother decided to re-marry, to a certain Edwin A. Eckdahl, an engineer living at Fort Worth. This proved a tumultuous marriage, and in 1948 Eckdahl accused his wife of cruelty and of going through his pockets. His lawyer, Fred Korth, who later became Navy Minister, got him a divorce – and one without alimony.

In order to bring up her children, Mrs Oswald worked in a sweet factory. Lee went to the Fort Worth elementary school: a quiet child, a great reader, who did not join much in the games of his classmates. As a pupil, his rating was average.

When his mother decided to go to live in New York, where the elder son was doing his military service, Lee was sent to the public high school in the Bronx. But he very often played truant: forty-seven days in four months. It was decided that he should be put in the care of the children's court.

The investigator John Carro discovered that the fourteen-year-old boy preferred staying at home to watch television. His mother refused to take the matter seriously, and Lee was summoned before the children's court despite all her protests. To this day, Mrs Oswald claims that the only

reason for her son's trouble was that in class he was mocked because of his Southern accent.

"But," she says, "we were poor, and with the poor they do what they like."

Dr Renatus Hartogs examined the weedy little boy for a month, and classed him as "potentially dangerous". He was found to be violent under his quiet appearance, to have a hatred of authority, to be aggressive, unfeeling, obstinate and solitary.

But the New York authorities, who have managed to preserve and find this curious medical report ten years later, did nothing to cure him. The town hadn't the necessary funds for such small matters.

The mother returned to New Orleans. Lee seemed to improve, and somehow got his high school graduation diploma. He haunted the libraries, and discovered Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*. Later he was to say:

"That day I was like a very religious man who opens the Bible for the first time in his life."

Yet another move, and the Oswalds were back in Fort Worth. Here, at the high school Lee attended, a girl fell madly in love with him. The youth was gauche, danced badly, was not generous – and with good reason – but there were moments when he could show a great deal of passion. The affair did not last long. Lee was seventeen. Seventeen is the minimum age for volunteering for the Marines. The Marines (or expeditionary corps of soldier-sailors) are the élite of the United States Forces – rather like the S.S. under Hitler, or the parachutists under de Gaulle. A marine is a hero, a superman, a legend. The corps takes only volunteers, and in a few months transforms boys into men.

In the United States, more films and books are produced to the glory of the Marines than on any other subject. Without the Marines there would never have been the

landings at Tripoli, Havana, Normandy, Iwo Jima, or in Korea. The Marines make a cult of super-patriotism and give hope of glory.

Lee Harvey Oswald had at last found the key to his future.

Oswald must have been an excellent soldier. He was mentioned several times in despatches, and received a medal for his excellent marksmanship. But he was not over-popular with his companions in arms.

"He wasn't tough enough, and he didn't talk much. When he did talk, you couldn't understand a word," says Donald Goodwin, his sergeant instructor.

John E. Donovan, who commanded the section at the Tustin Radar Base in California, where Oswald served, says that he read many Soviet newspapers and studied Russian literature.

His room-mate, Mack Osborn, says that Lee praised Marxism.

All this happened while he was in the Marines . . .

HE WAS sent to Japan. He was immediately court-martialled for the improper possession of a pistol. A second court-martial followed, this time for having insulted a sergeant-major.

Back in the United States, and after completing three years of service, Oswald asked to be discharged on the pretext that his mother was in uncertain health. The request was granted.

He did in fact go back to Fort Worth. He had on him \$1,600, his pay and gratuity. But he stayed only one night with his mother. Next morning he announced coldly that he was going to embark at New Orleans on a ship bound for Leningrad.

"Why did he go? Do you think I could have stopped him? He wanted to write a book which would make him famous," Marguerite Oswald was to say later.

The young man was only twenty when, on October 13th 1959, in the middle of the "cold war", he arrived in Moscow. He booked in at a small hotel, entering himself in the register as "an export agent".

Some days later, on the 31st of the same month, he presented himself to an official of the United States Embassy and declared:

"I've had enough. I want to become a Soviet citizen."

The affair caused a stir. His mother telephoned from Fort Worth, and he hung up on her. He sent to the Embassy a sworn declaration:

"I swear fidelity to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

The Command of the Marines at Washington were in a state of shock lest the matter became known to Congress.

"They're capable of refusing our finance estimates – all our publicity will go for nothing . . ."

So Oswald was "dishonourably discharged" from the Marines on the pretext that as a Reservist he had had no right to go to Russia.

Oswald was outraged. His position in the Marines seems still to have been important to him, although he was no longer an American citizen. He addressed a letter of protest to the Navy Minister, Connally – the same who was to become Governor of Texas. Connally sent the letter to his successor, Korth – the lawyer who had obtained the divorce decree against Oswald's mother . . .

The Soviets are a little more difficult than the Americans when it comes to sheltering defectors. They want only the cream. Oswald did not inspire them with much confidence, and he had no particular talent. He was refused citizenship. He must live in Russia as a foreigner, and content himself with a job in a steel factory at Minsk, at 80 roubles a month.

Oswald was later to say that life there was horrible:

Dallas police guard the building believed to house the assassin



A plain-clothes officer carries away from the building the high-powered rifle used to kill the President

mean lodgings, insufficient food, no holidays, and nothing but long Communist propaganda tirades.

But there was Marina Feodorovna Prusakova, the young pharmacist at the factory. She was born in Leningrad in 1941. Her father died when she was two and her mother married Alexander Medvedyev. In 1957 her mother died and Marina, sixteen, left home for Minsk. When her stepfather heard of her marriage to Oswald he immediately disowned her. Marina fell in love straight away with the exotic Yank. She was to say later:

"He was so lonely, so sad, *so very much on his own.*"

Oswald had decided to go back to the United States, but for that a Soviet exit visa was necessary – and this was refused him. He had to wait for it a year and a half. He married Marina, and they had a little girl, June Lee, born on February 5th 1962. Oswald wanted to have her baptised by proxy at Fort Worth, but when he learned that the Pastor wanted an "offering" in dollars, he was much annoyed, and gave up the idea.

He wrote a letter to the Senator for Texas, John G. Tower, a diehard conservative, declaring:

"I am a prisoner in the U.S.S.R. against my will. Help me." The Senator intervened with the State Department; later he said that he had simply forwarded the letter, without comment. The State Department then made very energetic representations to the Kremlin to obtain this visa, and at the same time gave Oswald a new passport for himself and his family.

While at Minsk, Lee wrote often to his mother:

"Send me some shaving cream, razor blades, chocolate, chewing gum, magazines and detective novels . . . a pocket edition of Orwell's 1984 . . . I am going to be a papa. I hope it will be a boy! . . . Mama, don't try to come here to see us . . . Good news, we are leaving in a month's time. Mama, do something important for us – write to an organisation

D

Detective Bill Walthers pictured retrieving what the author believes was the mysterious fourth bullet a few minutes after the assassination

called the International Rescue Committee* and ask them for \$800 for two tickets, Moscow–New York–Texas. Don't send us anything out of your own pocket. And don't take a loan, ask for it as a gift . . .”

The mother could not get the money, and it was the United States Embassy in Moscow which advanced the funds for the return journey. The Government were later repaid by Oswald.

THE OSWALDS arrived in New York by ship on June 13th 1962. Oswald gave a fantastic account of his stay in Russia to the representative of the Aid Organisation sent to meet them. He had served as a guard at the Embassy and been kidnapped by Communist agents. Oswald asked to be repatriated to Texas at the organisation's expense. But they telegraphed to his brother Robert, who promised by telephone to send the necessary \$300.

WHILE HIS wife was staying with Mrs Paine, Oswald went to New Orleans, where he found work with another engraver. But when Mrs Paine went to see him in September, he was once again out of work.

Marina returned to Irving with her friend. The young Russian woman was expecting another baby, and needed care. The good Mrs Paine also took back in her car, a 1956 station waggon, all the Oswalds' possessions, including a mysterious long object completely enclosed in a covering.

For his part, Oswald was supposed to be going to Houston. He did not return to Dallas until twelve days later, went to see his wife, and then rented the little room in Mrs Johnson's lodging-house under a false name.

On Monday, October 14th, Mrs William Randell went to see her friend, Dorothy Roberts, who seemed troubled . . .

“You know my neighbour – there's a Russian living with

*An Organisation for anti-Communist refugees.

her, a poor woman persecuted by the Communists. She's expecting a baby at any minute, and her husband is out of work . . .”

“Try at the Texas Book Depository,” Mrs Randell suggested.

Note that on that day President Kennedy's visit to Texas was not known of for certain, and that no-one knew anything of the route he would take.

Mrs Paine telephoned the Book Depository, and was put in touch with the manager, R. S. Truly.

“Send us round this future papa, we'll try to help him . . .”

Oswald went there next day, and made an excellent impression on Truly, whom he told that he had only recently left the Marines.

“I engaged him on the spot at \$1.25 an hour, forty hours a week. He was to work from 8 in the morning to 4.45 in the afternoon, with three quarters of an hour for lunch, from 12.15 . . .

“It was intended,” Truly was later to say. “That day, two people applied. I needed one for the main building and the other for an out-of-the-way depot that no-one would ever have passed . . . Oswald arrived first, and I decided to keep him with me . . .”

On October 20th, Marina gave birth to a little girl, Rachel Lee, at the Parkland Municipal Hospital. The ever-kind Mrs Paine had sold two pints of her blood in order to pay part of the expenses.

Dr Malcolm Perry can remember the sweet, sad and lovely Marina. They exchanged a few words in Latin, of which language Marina, as a pharmacist, knew a little.

The father did not go to the hospital, but he was very happy at the birth. Each week-end he spent all his time with the new baby. And on the evening of Thursday November 21st, instead of going back to his rented room he

asked another employee, Wesley Frazier, to give him a lift to Mrs Paine's house . . .

His colleague was surprised.

"I thought you only went there at week-ends."

"I want to see my children, and I also have to get some curtain-rods for the curtains in my room . . ."

Oswald played with the babies, watched the television for a bit, then went to the garage. Mrs Paine remembers it, because he forgot to turn off the electric light.

He went to bed early, as usual. For him, there was not much point in pausing to count his blessings. Since his return, he had not earned so much as \$3,000 – an absurdly low sum – and had changed jobs seventeen times. He lived apart from his family, and could not even provide for the new-born child. People shunned him, called him unbalanced, arrogant, good-for-nothing.

In the F.B.I. file on him is noted:

"He's a Marxist who has never carried through a single project."

Perhaps Lee Harvey Oswald dreamed that night of the act that he was to commit next day – the first successful one of his life.

CHAPTER FOUR

It is the Fashion to Hate . . .

THE HEAD of the printing department of the *Dallas Daily News* tried vainly that night, Thursday–Friday, to get in touch with the paper's Advertising Manager. The latter had already taken advantage of the long week-end to go fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. The print manager had a problem: an advertiser, a certain Bernard Weissman, was patiently waiting for the first proof of a publicity lay-out, a full page spread, but was insisting that the advertisement should be framed with a black border, just like those on a card announcing a death.

"There's nothing like that on my order-sheet," grumbled the overseer. "I must have an O.K. from upstairs . . ."

Finally he got hold of the Managing Editor:

"The announcement by the American Fact Finding Committee? Oh yes, give it a good splash. Just think, the boss likes it so much that he might even put it in free . . . That would spare him the trouble of writing his own editorial."

In the last few days, the *Dallas Daily News* had indeed devoted a whole barrage of editorials to criticism of President Kennedy's policies. They called him incompetent, irresponsible, idiotic, conscienceless, anti-American, anti-Republican, anti-capitalist, anti-Protestant, and of course anti-Texan. So the advertisement in great black type on page 2 of the newspaper which would go on sale in

the early hours of Friday morning would not greatly shock its readers:

"You are not welcome, Mr President. Dallas rejects your policies and your philosophy. In fact, you are a traitor . . .

"The people of Dallas know that the head of the American Communist Party, Gus Hall, is in league with you and will help in your re-election . . .

"You, Kennedy, have struck the Monroe Doctrine from the book of our Nation in order to replace it by the spirit of Moscow."

BERNARD WEISSMAN, a young Jew of twenty-six, was supposed to be only passing through Dallas, although he was living there in a luxurious bachelor apartment. He had obviously not had much difficulty in persuading the newspaper to pass his text. Hadn't the head of the political section of the same newspaper written:

"Here in Dallas, hating Kennedy is a popular game."? Had not the director of the same newspaper, Ted Dealey, dared to say impudently to Kennedy, during a press conference at the White House:

"Mr President, we need a knight who will lead this Nation on horseback, but you lead it pedalling on your daughter Caroline's tricycle . . ."? On his return, Dallas had fêted him for saying that.

It is not known for certain just who put up the \$4,500 for the advertisement, but in Dallas it is very easy to find the money when one wants to attack the Government.

THE MULTI-MILLIONAIRE L. H. Hunt, whose income from his oil-wells is half a million dollars a day, has a whole army of "bravi" in his pay. After having supported the ill-famed Senator Joseph McCarthy, he now finances a daily programme on television and radio which propagates extremist views.

There is Don Snoots, whose Political Letter has 55,000 subscribers, and that in a town of some 400,000 inhabitants. The Letter is also read, on paid time, from fifty radio and ten television stations. For Don Snoots, Washington is a nest of traitors.

There is the retired General, Edwin Walker, a professional soldier who has gone into politics because the Government compelled him to leave his post in Berlin, where he commanded the American garrisons. It was this same Walker who was involved in disturbances at Oxford, Mississippi, when the coloured student Meredith wished to enrol at the University there. The Government arrested Walker, then magnanimously did no more than submit him to psychiatric examination. Walker, in protest, flew the American flag the wrong way round in front of his house – also situated in the Oak Cliff quarter – whenever a high Washington personality visited Dallas. He had done it with Stevenson, and he did it that night with Kennedy. But Walker was not at home; he had gone, for some reason unknown, to New Orleans, Oswald's native town, where the ex-defector had worked for a number of weeks before returning to Dallas.

Another association hostile to the Kennedys was the National Indignation Convention, which combined all those who considered the Government in power to be dangerous.

THAT NIGHT *The Thunderbolt*, a weekly published in Alabama, was sold in Dallas. The title, in giant letters on the front page, was KENNEDY KEEPS MISTRESSES. That front-page story was lurid . . .

THAT NIGHT, too, a group of volunteers from that section of the Republican Party which upheld Senator Barry Goldwater finished making a huge banner meant to be

held aloft at the airport next morning during the President's arrival.

LET'S BURY KING JOHN was the slogan; and that phrase was a little masterpiece of election propaganda.

"Let's bury King John" seems simple enough; but a play on the word "bury" was intended, since when spoken with the American accent, there is little difference between "bury" and "Barry" – the implication being that Senator Barry Goldwater would triumph over Kennedy.

The nickname "King John" was a malicious reference to the fact that in the eyes of the Right Wing Kennedy was a despot who, like Napoleon, gave all the members of his family important positions.

But the word "bury", too, had another dangerous double meaning, an allusion to Krushchev's unfortunate phrase about "burying the United States" – thus slyly accusing Kennedy of helping the Soviets in their grave-digging task.

Fortunately, next day neither Kennedy nor anyone else took the slightest notice of this placard, which was lost amid the popular enthusiasm. Had it not been for a chance photograph, this little dramatic detail of the arrival in Dallas would have been lost for ever.

ALTHOUGH Robert Welch the "pope" of the John Birch Society (a semi-secret but publicity-hunting organisation) lives in Santa Barbara, California, most of his supporters are to be found in Dallas. The society claims to wage constant war on "the Communist conspiracy" undermining the American way of life. It looks upon Eisenhower as an agent of Moscow, and the Republican Head of the Supreme Court, Earl Warren, as Enemy No. 1 of all true American patriots.

THE HEADQUARTERS staff of the Minutemen had just finished their weekly meeting, and had gone to have a

whisky or two with their "fuehrer", Robert Dupugh, on the second floor of the private club at the Hilton Hotel. "Alert" was the watch-word. The Minutemen are a sort of clandestine armed militia, who are in constant training with a view to opposing a "Communist invasion". They had just put out a proclamation announcing that thanks to them Dallas was an impregnable city, and that the Reds would be trapped by their "guerilleros" in the vast Texan deserts.

WHILE HE was still in Moscow, Lee Harvey Oswald had declared to an American journalist:

"In the United States it is the fashion to hate."

The phrase could well that night have been applied to that city of Dallas. And the Governor of Texas, John Connally, was very uneasy. He had several times, but in vain, asked Kennedy to give up the idea of driving through the town centre.

"It's too dangerous. It'll be quite enough to go quickly from the airport to the Trade Mart for the speech."

But Kennedy would not listen.

IN HIS so-expensive apartment at the Texas Hotel, at Fort Worth, Vice-President Johnson was having difficulty in going to sleep. He too was worried about what might happen next day in Dallas. He remembered that appalling incident during the campaign of 1960, when he and his wife were hooted at by the mob. They had spat in their faces and forced them to take refuge in an hotel.

And yet he, Johnson, was a product of Texas, the favourite son, champion of the South. Thanks to him, Kennedy had obtained a narrow majority in the State, 46,233 votes among 2,311,845 voters; without him Nixon would have won everywhere.

There had been, too, what had happened to Adlai

Stevenson, who like Johnson had tried in 1960 to obtain the presidential nomination (Kennedy beat them both) and who had since as a consolation prize been appointed ambassador at the United Nations. A month earlier, on 24th October, 1963, Stevenson had come to Dallas by invitation. He was coolly received at the airport. At the door of the hotel, while he was smiling and shaking hands, a young woman swathed in a mink cloak, Mrs Cora Frederick, shook a heavy placard and hit Stevenson in the face, while a young man (who lived, like Oswald, at Irving) spat at him.

"We Texans," this aggressive Amazon later explained to the press, "we are cowboys, who aren't satisfied just to shout. We go into action when necessary."

Since then, Stevenson had several times advised Kennedy not to set foot in Dallas.

"The President is safer in Berlin or in Moscow, than in Dallas" had prophesied Allan Maly, head of the local council of the AFL-CIO, the trades union organisation. And very properly the police chief, Jesse Curry, had announced that his men would not allow the smallest hostile gesture against the President's person.

Russell W. McLarry did not take the police chief's threat very seriously that night. A machinist by day, he went to night-school at Arlington University, situated in a suburb of Dallas. He had stayed on late with his friends. Then someone had given him a lift in a car to his home in the Oak Cliff quarter – that same district in which Oswald had rented a little furnished room under a false name.

"Tomorrow," said McLarry, who looked a lot younger than his twenty-one years, "I shall be at the Trade Mart with a gun, and while Kennedy's speaking I'll shoot him..."

WHAT, THEN, had John Fitzgerald Kennedy come to do among this assortment of people?

All the forecasts agreed that he would be re-elected in

1964 without need of Texas, and even without need of the South. The Democrat Party in Texas was in a chaotic state. There was Johnson's faction, Connally's, Senator Yarborough's, and that of Congressman Henry Gonzalez (the spokesman of the minorities). All these Democrats had just one thing in common – they were none of them on speaking terms. Kennedy was the only person with whom they were willing to talk.

However, the stake was worth the trouble; the stake was this marvellous State of Texas, directly south of the Union, but not a part of the South. Texas, which considers itself an independent unit, and even often seriously talks of becoming independent indeed. Texas, which has so much influence on what is called The West – the West of multi-millionaires, cowboys, wide open spaces and virgin lands. Texas, where is the Alamo, that Thermopylae of modern America, where a handful of heroes fought to the last man under siege by the armies of the Mexican general Santa Ana. Texas: huge, prodigious, astonishing – the one place in the United States after New York and Washington which the foreign tourist absolutely *must* see.

Although Alaska, which in 1960 became the 51st State of the Union, is bigger, Texas with its 267,339 square miles is formidably large. 77 of its 257 districts are bigger than the State of Rhode Island, which in turn is larger than Luxembourg. If Texas were located between New York and Chicago, it would overlap them both; if in Europe, it would stretch from London to Berlin. One ranch alone – belonging to the King family dynasty – is larger than all Switzerland.

Texas provides the western world with half its synthetic rubber, a third of its petroleum, a quarter of its rice and a fifth of its cotton. It has ten million inhabitants, a million of them black and a million of Mexican origin. It has ten

million cows. Everything is on a giant scale there – even history.

Texas is the only State of the Union which was independent for 9 years and 301 days, with its own flag, a blue star on a red field, and which as an independent republic voluntarily agreed to become part of the United States. That single star gave rise to the name “The Lone Star State”.

“Texas” derives from the Indian word *tejas*, meaning *friendship*. The region was colonised by the Spanish and the French, then came under Mexican domination. But the adventurers Stephen Austin and Sam Houston organised a coalition with the two thousand Yankees who had come to settle in those vast plains, and in 1836 rebellion became war.

After the tragedy of the Alamo, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana was beaten by Houston at San Jacinto, and Texas proclaimed itself a sovereign state. It sent ambassadors to London, Paris and Berlin, and had its own postal service and a fleet of six torpedo-boats.

Houston became the first president, and was re-elected. In 1846, Texas was admitted to the Union with Houston as its Governor. His reputation was formidable; he was nicknamed, with respect and admiration, “the great drunk”. After the Civil War, Texas seceded with the rest of the South, but suffered relatively less from the defeat, because of its immensity.

The cattlemen dominated the State until 1900. This was the time of the great ranches, the cowboys, and of that romantic conception later seized on by literature and Hollywood. Then came the growth of the cities, until at last, in 1901, near Beaumont, came the finding of the Spindletop well, which so suddenly that there was no hope of catchment, gushed skywards 900,000 barrels of oil. From being the largest, Texas now became the richest

State, private bank deposits alone being today in excess of five billion dollars.

One cannot speak of Texas as a unit. In the southeast are the immense forests of Piney Woods, some 850,000 acres – a relatively poor area, most of whose population is black. The trees, gigantic firs, almost all belong to the millionaires of Beaumont and Dallas.

The south, along the border with Mexico, has retained the pleasant charm of the Latin way of life. Here is great prosperity. There are so many pipe-lines, oil-wells and sources of natural gas that it is called “the spaghetti dish”. Labour is cheap and accommodating, mostly Mexicans who cross the frontier to find work in the factories and ranches.

The west, the redoubtable west, called The Panhandle, has not yet arrived in the twentieth century. The population is thin, 150,000 at the most; the climate capricious; the countryside depressing. No cars, no telephones, no trees. Here and there in the vast desert a wooden cross marks where a man died of thirst – come from no-one knows whence, going no-one knows where.

The cowboy wears the huge Borsalino hat and jeans, and always has a revolver at his belt. But often his horse has been replaced by a jeep, and he probably does not use his gun except on July 4th, Independence day.

The real heart of Texas lies in the great cities: Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and Austin, the capital.

“I love dawns and sunsets,” said Lyndon Johnson, “and at my ranch near Austin I can see both. It is a dry country,” he went on, “there is always the sun, and the wind. And we have birds that sing and flowers that grow and girls who laugh . . . It is also a strong country, breeding fearless soldiers and men with great courage. The grass is rich in minerals, and the cows are strong, big . . .”

Because of their past, the Texans are very chauvinistic indeed. They sell postcards which show Texas as dominat-

ing a map on which the rest of the United States can hardly be seen. Their patriotism, like everything else about them, is out of all proportion. This is why they are so easily impressed by extremist movements. Theirs is neither a State nor a province, but an Empire which has preserved its feudal traditions.

Side by side with great wealth there is great poverty and much exploitation; but because they are Texans the poor and exploited will not admit to being so. The Texan who travels spends twice as much as he can really afford, to prove himself "big". And he will always have ready an endless recital of statistics: Texas has the biggest bookshop in the United States, 59 radio stations, the deepest oil-well; the Governor's palace is the eighth largest in the world; they produce the most garlic; Uvalde, Texas, is the world's capital for honey; Tyler, Texas, the capital for roses; Port Aransas the greatest oil-port in the world; Texas has 410 telephone companies, 4,000 varieties of wild flower, 95,200 oil-wells, and 42,000,000 chickens; while in Texas you find the most beautiful women in America, Joan Crawford, Ginger Rogers and Doris Day included.

There are less flattering statistics: the largest number of illiterates, the least encouraging scholastic results, and the greatest number of people refusing to cast their votes on election day.

In Texas lives Mrs Clara Driscoll, who one day – because a waiter at the White Plaza Hotel at Corpus Christi did not jump to answer her call – decided to buy up the land facing the White Plaza and there build a skyscraper much higher. She turned the skyscraper into an hotel, went out on the terrace and cocked a snook at the White Plaza . . .

IN ORDER not to give up some of its feudal conditions, to protect the interests of the oil millionaires (who pay less in

taxes than the rest of the Americans) and to keep high the name of Texas in Washington, Texas has created a highly efficient political machine. Its last boss was Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House of Representatives and ranking third in the succession to the presidency.

It was with Rayburn that Lyndon Baines Johnson served his political apprenticeship.

Lyndon Johnson's grandfather came to settle in Texas in 1846, and with a brother founded a small town which was to be named Johnson City – not in the grandfather's honour, but because a great many people named Johnson lived there. Johnson is the commonest name in the United States after Smith.

The grandfather raised cattle and took some part in politics. His son, Samuel Ealy Johnson, went in mainly for politics. He married Rebekah Baines, a farmer's daughter, and their son was born in a poor little log cabin at Stonewall, now abandoned.

For the first three months the infant was just called "Baby"; then the father suggested the name of Clarence, then Dayton, and finally Linden. The mother agreed to the last name, provided that it was spelled Lyndon.

Samuel died in 1936, but Rebekah lived until 1958 and was to see her son take his seat in the Senate at Washington.

Lyndon Johnson began life as a shoe-shine boy, then ran away to California and finally, after borrowing seventy-five dollars, took a course at the training-school in Texas. In 1932 he went to Washington as secretary to a Congressman. Worthy son of his father, he rapidly made his way in politics.

As Sam Rayburn's protégé, he was elected Congressman for Texas at twenty-nine; and so impressed Roosevelt that the latter told him:

"One day you will sit in my chair . . ."

Washington became Johnson's country, his home, and

in 1948 he was elected to the Senate with a majority of only 87 votes over his rival, Governor Coke Stevenson . . . soon he became leader of the Democrat majority in the Senate – a position which made him the most important man in Washington after the president.

At a dance in 1934 at the University of Texas, he met Claudia Alma Taylor, daughter of Thomas Jefferson Taylor, a second-hand dealer in Karnock, a poor village on the edge of the fir forest. A negress had nicknamed the child Lady Bird, thinking her bird-like, and the name stuck.

Lady Bird has often been quoted on the remote location of the farm where she grew up. It had no running water or bathroom. In such surroundings a girl learns to be a practical housekeeper. But she had more than backwoods good sense; she had ambition. She fell in love with the young political secretary, but she was farsighted enough to realise that he was a man with a future. This was not the starry-eyed wishful thinking of a bride.

They married within six weeks of meeting. It was well she had learned thrift on that Karnock farm. They set up home in a small Washington flat. The rent was \$47. Lady Bird walked miles with her shopping basket to make each dollar do the work of two.

In her husband's climb to the political peaks she was his wise guide and more. Her help was practical. She borrowed \$10,000 from her father to finance his first election campaign.

"Later, a \$46,000 inheritance from an aunt gave wider play for her initiative. She multiplied her capital many times. Today she controls several television stations, worth more than a million dollars.

Johnson, master of the Senate, expert in compromise, with a genius for parliamentary manoeuvre, and popular in the South, was the obvious Democrat candidate for the

presidential election in 1960. He was opposed by Stevenson (whose chances were slender since he had twice been beaten by Eisenhower), and by a young Senator rarely seen in the House but well backed by his father's millions: Jack Kennedy.

The American public is not keen on professional politicians. It much prefers the "outsider", the amateur, and the daring. Kennedy was chosen at Los Angeles. Johnson was very much disappointed; to such a point, indeed, that he swore never to work with the new candidate again, and never to be in any way obliged to him.

Johnson was sulking in his apartment, No. 7334 of the Biltmore Hotel at Los Angeles, when the telephone rang; Lady Bird took the call.

"This is Room 9333," said an unknown voice. It was Kennedy's room, and the young candidate came on the line straight away.

"Do persuade your husband to accept the post of Vice-President. We need him."

Some hours later, the news was official, and everyone in the party was greatly surprised. The spokesmen for the trades unions, the liberals, the negroes and internationalists, were all horrified: Johnson, the Southerner, the conservative, the schemer! But Kennedy had asked for no-one's advice; he needed Johnson's prestige in order to conquer the South, and he did not want a hostile Johnson making difficulties for him in the Senate.

After the election, Johnson was forgotten. Kennedy was too authoritarian to share with another the responsibilities of power. His entourage did not hide their hostility to the new Vice-President, who received many honours, travelled around the world, but was completely ignored by the White House.

A story went the rounds that a certain Lyndon Johnson was waiting at the Bureau of Missing Persons of the

Washington Police – but no-one arrived to claim him . . .

Johnson himself, by no means lacking in a sense of humour, said that Mrs Kennedy had had a huge crystal chandelier, which clattered with every draught, installed in his office “in order to stop me going to sleep.”

But this visit to Texas was to be a revenge for him. Here he was at home, here he counted for something. And on that very evening of Friday, November 22nd, Kennedy and his wife would sleep in the “Spanish Room” at his home, the ranch on the Pedernales river.

The ranch had been built by his grandfather as a strong-point against Redskin attack. It was made of great stones, with loopholes for firing upon the enemy. Thanks to his wife, Johnson had modernised and furnished it lavishly; he kept cattle on the 40 acres surrounding the main building. There was even a landing-strip, not to mention the short-wave transmitter, swimming-pool and huge garage.

That night, all the staff were awake, feverishly getting everything ready for the reception on Friday evening when Kennedy would arrive at the ranch after his Dallas meeting. Johnson would receive him there as in other days a baron received the sovereign in his castle.

IT WAS ON that same night that around three o'clock Mrs Jeane Dixon, in Washington, was abruptly awakened by a nightmare. She at once telephoned the White House and asked for “the Secret Service”.

“You must warn the President – he’s going to be killed tomorrow. Don’t let him go to Dallas. My visions are always right. I foresaw his election, and Rockefeller’s marriage . . . He must be warned at once.”

The officer on duty, furious at having been awakened for this, is reported to have not even thanked her and gone back to sleep on his sofa.

CHAPTER FIVE

He didn’t like the ‘Sardine Can’

HALF-A-DOZEN SECRET SERVICE men, part of the presidential escort, had not yet gone to bed that night. They were at the Fort Worth Press Club (two steps from the hotel at which President Kennedy was staying) drinking beer, vodka and bourbon. It was against regulations, but the discipline of the Secret Service had become oddly relaxed under Kennedy.

Even bodyguards are human. They could hardly be blamed for living it up a bit, especially when their hosts were the accredited journalists, much better paid than policemen; and since apart from the Press Club there was no alcohol to be found anywhere else in all “driest” Fort Worth.

The special agents would catch up on their sleep on the aeroplane journey and during the long procession next day – which seemed likely to be very dull for them.

Gerald A. Behn, head of the White House section of the Secret Service – about which there is nothing secret except the name – had not come to Texas. This was rather strange, since Behn always took part in presidential journeys. Was it some sort of silent protest? The special agents were furious because the Senate had just refused the credits necessary to take on a further twenty-five detectives.

With only four hundred men, most of them engaged in chasing counterfeiters, the Secret Service had no longer the

staff necessary to guard a Head of State in an age of rapid communications, and when leaders feel it necessary to mix with the crowds. For big occasions they had to apply for re-inforcements to the F.B.I., which was quick to "lend" its men, but not without some ironical comments . . . which made the Secret Service gnash their teeth.

THE ORIGINS of the Secret Service go back to the Civil War. In 1865, some weeks before his death – it was to be one of his last legislative acts – Abraham Lincoln decided to form a corps of adventurers (several forgers among them) to combat the traffic in counterfeit money in the reconquered Southern States. Their organisation was very vague, and they were paid from the Secret Fund of the Treasury Department – hence their title.

In 1901, after the assassination of President McKinley, the Government decided that it was essential to do something for the protection of the president. They did not want to use the Armed Forces, the civil power in the United States being always suspicious of the military. Nor, for similar reasons, did they wish to create a sort of political police; the services of public order in Washington were anyway quite insufficient.

Then someone remembered the Treasury Department's odd corps of "gorillas", and the White House asked for a number "on loan". The solution was all the more convenient because it made it unnecessary to ask Congress for funds.

SECRET SERVICE agents must all be very strong and healthy, well-educated and highly skilled in the use of weapons. When in Washington, they practise every day with pistol, rifle and sub machine-gun at a special range, in the vaults of the Treasury Department. They are taught judo, and from time to time take special courses at the

F.B.I. training college. They must be excellent swimmers, know how to ski and pilot a helicopter (in case it is necessary to save the president from peril at sea or in the mountains). They must be excellent investigators, know how to examine an electrical circuit to guard against sabotage or tapping; be experts in explosives; and be able to wear evening dress with an air in order to mix with the guests at White House receptions without it being suspected who they really are – or that they are armed.

Entry is not easy, but the salary is relatively attractive: between \$600 and \$1,000 a month, according to seniority. After all, a policeman is a policeman, whatever he's called, and \$600 is three times as much as he could earn elsewhere – while the prestige is enormous.

They wear plain clothes, but their sartorial style tends to be characteristic: a navy blue suit, "varsity cut", white shirt, and multicoloured tie. You can tell them by their way of dressing without having to look for the betraying little blue enamel star in the lapel.

In private, they are very polite; but in public heaven help the journalist who finds himself in their way. While he was still just a candidate, Kennedy was once roughly thrust aside when he found himself near to Eisenhower.

The great majority of the four hundred men of "the Service" are permanently engaged in tracing counterfeit money. The "White House Detail" consists of only fifty-six men; though to these must be added the specialists who supervise the mail, and those engaged in special enquiries connected with the Presidency. The White House receives some 30,000 letters a week. They are all sorted in a special room. The Secret Service examine them; X-ray parcels; make chemical analyses of certain papers and fluids; and if need arises trace the origin of threatening telephone calls.

The president regularly receives threats to his life,

warnings of attempts upon it, threats to drop an atomic bomb on the White House. Almost always they come from the deranged or from practical jokers. But the Secret Service study each one, follow up clues, and if necessary request action against those uttering threats, whose names are all placed on a long Black List.

The Secret Service also screen the employees of the presidential household, and of course make discreet enquiries each time a journalist or photographer is accredited to the White House.

But the function of the Secret Service is not political. It does not concern itself with the deep plots which may go on in the Senate or at the Pentagon, and would do nothing to prevent a *coup d'état*. Their work is purely practical and policemanly. There is nothing of the Gestapo about them.

However, James Rowley, director of the Service, by profession a lawyer, must keep up-to-date with events. For example, he had to surround both Kennedy and Johnson with guards immediately the first results of the presidential elections were announced. During a visit by a foreign Head of State he must also use a good deal of diplomacy, especially when the visitor comes from a country behind the Iron Curtain.

The uniformed guard at the White House should not be confused with the Secret Service. At the beginning of the century, the Washington police sent a group of men to keep guard at the grilled doors of the presidential palace, in much the same way that men are sent to keep order in a theatre, or to a disorderly bar.

Then it was decided to form a special squad, whose men would be better paid and assigned to permanent duty. Their task is relatively easy. They open doors, answer tourists' questions and chase off the squirrels; but in the event of danger it is their duty to form a living barrier.

That is how two of them came to be shot down before President Truman's door.

WHEN A president travels, a selected group of Secret Service men precedes him in their own special plane, and confer with the local authorities on security plans.

Every detail of the visit is studied; hotel rooms, stations and halls are examined with special detection apparatus. Above all, well-armed men are posted throughout the area. Finally, the dossiers of the local police or of the F.B.I. are carefully studied, so that suspect persons may be kept under surveillance, or even detained for a short time.

The head of the Secret Service had a power of veto over the president's movements. Eisenhower said once: "They won't let me watch the atomic tests."

Franklin Roosevelt complained that his private train was rather uncomfortable because of its ancient springs. But the Secret Service insisted on it because the old train was made of steel, and would give better protection in the event of an assassination attempt.

Truman didn't like having his bodyguard trotting after him every morning, when at 6 o'clock he took his "constitutional".

"They walk too slowly, your men," he said. And once, one Christmas Eve, he deliberately ignored the Secret Service veto on a proposed visit to his mother at Kansas City. Bad weather had closed almost all the commercial airports. Truman went, just the same, from a military airfield.

The president must never be alone is the cardinal rule of the Service. Agents swim with the president, go to the cinema with him and follow him everywhere. The whole of the special squad was at the Yalta Conference; and again, later, with Kennedy at the Berlin Wall.

When President Woodrow Wilson was courting Edith

Bolling, whom he was to marry, he was aware, from their first meetings, of a vague sensation of being watched all the time. He telephoned the police.

"But, Mr President, don't you know that two Secret Service men follow you constantly . . .?"

Wilson did not protest. "Go on. It's your duty," he said – and ever since there has been no private life for the Chief Executive or for the members of his family.

LIKE HIS predecessors, Kennedy kicked against it. He tried to prove his independence on the very evening of his inauguration.

He disappeared mysteriously at about 2 o'clock in the morning, causing a veritable panic among the Secret Service men. After that, his escapades were endless. He went alone incognito to the cinema, and went to dinner with friends. During the visit of King Hassan of Morocco he left the White House on foot without telling anyone, crossed the avenue and went to see his royal guest in Blair House.

During his last visit to New York, on November 14th, a week before the journey to Dallas, he did without his motorcycle escort and even asked that there should be no protective line of police at the roadsides. The New Yorkers had indeed protested that such security precautions were enormously expensive, upset city traffic and were bad for trade; shopkeepers could sell nothing while their customers waited for the president to go by. The official car even had to stop like any other at each red light.

There was an alarm when at the corner of 72nd Street a young man went right up to the President – taking advantage of the fact that the car had been halted at the crossroads by the traffic signal – and took as many photographs as he liked before the escort could intervene.

This carelessness of Kennedy's was not just a consequence of his rebellious character. He was an elected president,

whose election largely depended upon his personal popularity. Like a dictator, a president of the United States must satisfy the demands of the crowd. He must shake hands and smile, let himself be seen.

When begged to be more careful, John Kennedy would reply with a shrug:

"It's an occupational risk."

For him, it was also a matter of principle. He was the leader of the free world, Democracy's champion. He could not refuse to be seen. He did not want to hide behind closed blinds, or surround himself with hundreds of policemen armed to the teeth like a Communist tyrant.

What impression would it have made on the Berliners if he had hid himself behind a wall of sub machine-guns? No, he must prove to the world that the president of the United States was a free man, living among free men, in safety and confidence.

It was difficult for the Secret Service to ignore these arguments; after all, it is not for nothing that they refer to the president as "the boss". It's the boss who has the last word.

As U. E. Baugham, retired from the post of Secret Service head for some years, explained philosophically:

"A president gets the protection he deserves."

AMERICA is today in the forefront of Democracy. But that does not automatically ensure her wisdom and experience. She is above all a young country; her history does not yet span two centuries. She is also, alas, a country which periodically murders her Heads of State in as sinister a way as Tsarist Russia, or some eastern empire.

It is true that the assassinations do not always have political motives. At least, it has never been proved that they had. Most of the assassins were deranged; but that alone does not explain what they did.

What lies at the root of these repeated assassinations and attempted assassinations is the miasmic climate of hatred; the constant friction; the taking for granted of the use of firearms; the idea that in politics one can be a kind of avenging angel.

America is the Land of Freedom – but not the Land of Tolerance.

One must not forget that within her huge frontiers live many races, many religions, many nationalities; and that in the United States today internal dissensions are as intense as they were in Europe during the Middle Ages.

With a sort of Irish Nationalist fervour, the Southerners continue to regard themselves as a conquered people. They are always waving the Confederate flag, singing *Dixie*, talking of the men of the North as “Yankees” – enemies. (The children play in Southern Army uniforms). They still look on Lincoln, the greatest president in American history, as a monster; to such a point that in the South the television stations ban documentaries of his life.

In such an atmosphere, the function of the Secret Service must be essential; it is vital for the security of the state, and perhaps Kennedy was wrong to undervalue it.

THE FIRST attempt on a president's life took place in 1835. It failed.

President Andrew Jackson was attending a funeral at the Capitol, in Washington. A mad-looking man stepped out of the crowd, went up to Jackson, took a pistol from his pocket and fired. But the gun did not go off. At once the man took out another pistol. Again the gun did not fire.

Recovering from his surprise, the President struck his assailant with his walking-stick, and the man was then overpowered by the police.

Later, experts examined both guns and fired them many times without the least difficulty. It has been stated that the

odds against such a double misfire were a million to one.

The intending assassin, Richard Lawrence, was a painter by profession, and lived in Washington. He was confined in a mental home, and died there sixteen years after Jackson, on June 13th, 1861.

ON GOOD Friday, 1865, Abraham Lincoln appeared in public for the first time after the victorious conclusion of the Civil War.

Just five days earlier General Grant had received the surrender of his Southern adversary General Lee, in a schoolhouse in Appomattox. The long, appalling, bloody civil war which had so fundamentally split the nation was over at last.

Lincoln lunched with his wife and two children; one of them, Robert, had just arrived from Appomattox. He had been invited to a first night at the Ford Theatre. The play was a farce called *Our American Cousin*, the fun arising from the misadventures of an English girl in America. Lincoln had turned down the invitation; he wanted to spend Easter in quiet. Then, during the afternoon, he was informed that General Grant was not going either. But the people of Washington wanted to celebrate their triumph; if neither went, there would be great disappointment. So the President decided to go.

The presidential box, draped with the national flag, was next to the stage. Mrs Lincoln sat in the front, while Lincoln preferred a deep armchair in the shadows. A plain-clothes man from the White House moved from the back to the front of the box, because he could see nothing from behind the President. No-one noticed that a hole had been pierced in the door, through which Lincoln's movements could be observed.

During the war, Lincoln's person had been protected night and day, but there had never been an attempt on his

life. The only such attempt had been in February 1861, before Lincoln had taken the oath, and therefore while he was still only president-elect. A group of conspirators planned to blow up Lincoln's train in Baltimore station but were arrested before they could do so.

It was during the third act, while Lincoln was laughing heartily, that a bearded young man opened the door of the President's box, levelled his long pistol, a "derringer", fired, and shouted stridently: "*Sic semper tyrannis!*" (Thus perish all tyrants.)

Lincoln's head fell forward upon his chest. The bullet had struck him in the nape of the neck and lodged near the right eye.

Mrs Lincoln cried "Oh, no!" and an official tried to arrest the assassin, who jumped from the box on to the stage, spraining an ankle as he fell, then disappeared into the wings.

The audience was still laughing, not understanding what had happened.

Soldiers carried Lincoln into a nearby house, but despite desperate efforts by the doctors the President died at seven next morning. Two coins were laid on his eyes, and the War Minister, Stanton, said heavily: "Now Lincoln belongs to all time."

The assassin was John Wilkes Booth, a twenty-six year old actor, very intense and romantic. Though a Northerner by origin he was a fanatical partisan of the cause of the Confederacy.

His intention at first was to kidnap Lincoln and exchange him for Southern prisoners of war. He put himself at the head of a small group, but his accomplices soon gave up – perhaps because they were frightened of this handsome young man who talked in verse, waving a dagger. Only three stayed with him. It was they who, while Booth was killing Lincoln, invaded the house of the Secretary of

State, William H. Seward, cut down his son before his eyes, wounded him in the shoulder and escaped. The Secretary of State ordered martial law.

Booth was traced to a farm in Virginia. It was set on fire and he was shot down while trying to escape from it. He never gave any reason for his crime, or confessed anything at all. His accomplices were hanged, as was the owner of the house where he lodged. A doctor who, innocently he claimed, had attended him while he was still at large was imprisoned for life.

The trial was held *in camera*. The accused's heads were hooded and their hands manacled. They had no legal aid.

Many people in America have never believed that Booth was the real assassin. The mystery of the crime has never been fully cleared up, despite a good deal of investigation.

WHEN, IN 1881, James A. Garfield became president, a certain Charles Guiteau, claiming that he had given great help in the election campaign, demanded that he should be appointed consul in Paris by way of reward. Garfield passed him on to his Secretary of State, who tactfully explained that for the moment there was no vacancy in the Consular Service.

Guiteau besieged the White House for months in the hope of being appointed. Gradually he came to hate Garfield, and to believe that he had a divine mission to exterminate the President.

He bought a revolver, and made up his mind to kill Garfield one Sunday while the President was sitting in his pew in church. But on the Saturday the President had to leave Washington, and the newspapers gave the time of departure. Guiteau lay in wait for him at the station, but when the President passed near him he was accompanied by his wife. Guiteau gave up the attempt, not wishing to frighten Mrs Garfield. It was not until Garfield came back

that he followed the President and shot him twice in the back. Then he quietly surrendered his weapon to the police and asked to be protected from the crowds.

Garfield died three months later, and Guiteau was executed for his crime.

ON SEPTEMBER 6th, 1901, President William McKinley was attending the opening of the Great Pan-American Exhibition at Buffalo, near Niagara Falls. He shook hands with hundreds of visitors and when a slender, dark young man with a bandaged hand came up to him the President made to take his other hand. The young man, Leon Czolgosz, an immigrant of Polish origin, offered his left hand – and with his right drew a pistol, with which he shot McKinley twice through the chest.

The President staggered, his friends holding him up. The crowd wanted to lynch the assassin, but McKinley insisted that they leave him alone. McKinley was to die eight days later.

Czolgosz was condemned to death.

It was after this that the Secret Service was given the task of protecting the President's person.

STILL ASSASSINATION attempts went on.

When, on October 13th, 1912, John N. Schrank, a barman of German origin, shot at Theodore Roosevelt as he came out of the Gilpatrick Hotel in Milwaukee, the latter was no longer president. But he still had a right to Secret Service protection.

The bullet was miraculously stopped by the manuscript of the speech which Roosevelt was about to make, and his spectacle-case. Roosevelt made his speech, and did not go to hospital for attention until two hours later. The bullet remained in his chest until his death, the doctors considering its removal too risky.

UNTIL 1937, the presidents of the United States were installed in March, not in mid-January as they are now. Accordingly, Franklin D. Roosevelt was still only President-Elect when in February 1933 he arrived in Miami during a cruise on multi-millionaire Vincent Astor's yacht – a much-needed post-election vacation. Roosevelt went ashore in order to take part in a Democrat Party meeting.

An anarchist, Giuseppe Zangara, a thirty-two-year-old mason working in Miami, wanted to kill President Herbert Hoover. But Hoover was in Washington and he, Zangara, here . . . Then suddenly Roosevelt arrived.

Zangara told himself that a future president was well worth one soon to retire. He managed to get near to Roosevelt, and shot five times at point-blank range. He missed the President, but killed the Mayor of Chicago instantly.

Although believed insane, he was nonetheless tried, and electrocuted in Florida.

THE ATTEMPT upon Harry Truman's life was even more spectacular, the work of Puerto Rican nationalists.

Puerto Rico, of course, is one of America's Caribbean possessions, and receives from her huge economic aid. New York has been invaded by Puerto Rican immigrants who have the vote and receive all sorts of subsidies. It is hard to imagine that the island really wants its independence; still there exists a tiny "irredentist" party, whose aims are not very clear.

Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola, two young members of this party, arrived in Washington on October 31st, 1950. They later claimed that they merely wanted to demonstrate in front of President Truman's residence; but they were armed with guns, and sixty-six bullets.

At the time, Truman was having the White House re-decorated, and was living on the otherside of the avenue, at

Blair House. This is simply a big house, with no railing, gateway or garden.

Outside, the house was guarded by uniformed policemen and a few Secret Service men, armed with nothing more than revolvers. Inside, at the foot of the stairway, was another protective ring, of men armed with revolvers but also with sub machine-guns to hand. In addition, there were two other armed men at the President's bedroom door. Truman was having his afternoon nap.

After studying the terrain, the two daring assassins decided to separate. They shook hands (it was the last time they were to see each other) and approached Blair House from opposite directions. Collazo had bought himself a new suit for the occasion.

The uniformed guards were quite unsuspecting.

Torresola arrived first at a little sentry-box in which Leslie Coffelt, one of the guards, was sitting. The latter never knew what was happening: Torresola shot him down coldly, the revolver touching his chest.

At that moment, Collazo arrived at the sentry-box at the other end of the pavement, but walked calmly by as if he were just a sight-seer. He went up the steps. Another guard, Donald T. Birzell, was on duty at the door. He did not see Collazo draw his revolver and fire.

The shot did not go off. Stupefied, Collazo hit the gun with his hand, as if trying to unjam it. It was then that Birzell realised what was going on. He tried to draw his own revolver, but just then Collazo's weapon did fire, and the guard was hit in the leg.

Collazo went on shooting. With great courage, the guard then went down the steps before swinging round to return his assailant's fire – in order to prevent injury to the many passers-by along the road.

Collazo thought Birzell mortally wounded, stopped firing and tried to open the door. It was then that two other

Right, hands clasped tightly, Robert and Jacqueline Kennedy watch the body of the President being placed in an ambulance for its journey back to Washington. Below, Mrs Kennedy witnesses the swearing in of the new President, Lyndon Johnson, prior to his return to the capital





The arrest of Lee Harvey Oswald, after he had been found in a Dallas cinema

policemen (the one in the second sentry-box and a colleague) opened fire on him. Collazo turned round, only to find that his revolver was empty.

He then did something quite unbelievable. He sat calmly down on the steps and set to work to re-load his revolver. The policemen were shooting at him, but a little iron balustrade protected him. Collazo was thus able to get up and continue the battle. He fired three times, and was then hit in the chest, collapsing in front of the door.

If Collazo was not a very good shot, Torresola on the other hand proved an excellent one. After shooting down Coffelt, he fired at another policeman, Joseph H. Down, who was seriously injured, then went to the aid of his comrade, Collazo. He wounded Birzell in the other leg, thus reducing the guard to helplessness.

In his turn, Torresola had to re-load. But the guard Coffelt (whom he had shot three times at point-blank range in the sentry-box) found the strength, despite his terrible wounds, to aim his revolver at him. Torresola was mortally wounded in the head, and died instantly.

While the policemen were getting themselves killed for him, President Truman did a very foolish and childish thing, which could have cost him his life. Awakened with a start by the shooting, and still in his underpants, he went to the window to see what was happening. Had he been noticed by one of the assassins, or had there been a third, catastrophe might have followed.

Collazo recovered, and was tried and condemned to death. Truman commuted the sentence to one of imprisonment for life.

In 1958 and 1959, other Puerto Rican nationalists planned attempts on the life of President Eisenhower. The first involved the throwing of grenades under his car; the second a fusillade of shots during a public ceremony.

Neither plot came to anything, thanks to preventive measures by the Secret Service.

ANOTHER PUERTO Rican, Silverio Cruz, threw himself armed, at Kennedy's car in Chicago, while Kennedy was still only a candidate.

Then, while he was still President-Elect, John F. Kennedy only just missed falling victim to a certain Richard P. Pavlick, who was apparently deranged.

The incident took place at Palm Beach, where the Kennedys have a winter residence, on the morning of Sunday, December 11th, 1960. Pavlick left this car, a Ford, outside their luxurious villa. In it were found seven sticks of dynamite with automatic detonators. The man had intended to engineer a collision with the future President's car, and in the confusion blow Kennedy, himself and guards all sky-high.

Fortunately, that morning Jacqueline and her daughter Caroline were with the young politician; and Pavlick, by a miracle of sentimentality, did not want to kill the wife and child as well. He decided to wait for another chance.

But the Secret Service had been alerted. A hunt for Pavlick began, and some days later he was arrested. He made a full confession. At his home were found films of all Kennedy's movements and a huge collection of photographs.

A year later, while Kennedy – now President of the United States – was preparing to go to Venezuela, a group of masked men burst into the police station of the little village of Urachiche, and after killing two officers seized a quantity of arms and ammunition.

Urachiche is on the motorway leading from La Guaira airport to Caracas, along which Kennedy was to pass. The bandits belonged to the so-called Liberation Movement, more or less pro-Castro.

Romolo Bethancourt, Venezuela's President (for whose safety Kennedy was in his turn to be concerned on the eve of November 22nd, 1963) at once warned Washington, and suggested that the visit should be postponed. Disorder had meanwhile broken out in his capital.

But Kennedy decided to take the risk.

"After all, if Nixon wasn't afraid, I – Kennedy – have no right to let myself be intimidated."

The guerrillas were fortunately put out of action by regular troops. A hundred Secret Service men were sent on ahead. American Marines were debarked from the cruiser *Northampton*. The Caracas police threw out a giant net. All possible precautions were taken.

However, one rebel, a certain El Toro, did succeed in getting into the airport grounds at La Guaira, and with grenades in his pocket. But he was not able to do anything; he was surrounded by Secret Service men.

The Kennedys' visit to Venezuela went off triumphantly.

ON THIS morning of Friday, November 22nd, 1963, special agent Bill Greer woke up very early.

For some reason, his first thought was that since 1901, when the Secret Service took on the task of protecting the presidents, the "record" was unblemished. The Service had never lost a president. All assassination attempts had been baulked.

Today he was to drive the presidential car. He went to his hotel window, and saw with dismayed surprise that the weather had turned fine.

"Damn!" he exclaimed disgustedly.

In good weather, the "bubble-top" (a plastic dome specially designed to cover the passengers in the presidential car without hiding them) could not be used. Actually, the plastic did not give complete protection against a bomb

or a bullet; but it would deflect them, which was something.

Unfortunately, Kennedy (like his predecessor, Eisenhower) did not like this dome, and had ordered Bill Greer not to use it except in very bad weather.

"It's suffocating under that thing. Like being in a sardine can," the President would often say to his chauffeur.

CHAPTER SIX

The Promoter

THE FLOOR WAITER, George E. Jackson, a negro, served breakfast in the President's room punctually at half-past eight, on this fateful morning of November 22nd.

Kennedy was already shaved and dressed. He had ordered orange juice, toast, coffee, and eggs boiled for five minutes. For Jacqueline, still asleep, there was orange juice, toast, and coffee served on a hot-plate.

The President had risen at quarter to eight, and had already had a talk with his *aide-de-camp*, General Godfrey T. McHugh.

"Nothing new," that officer said. He handed over some newspapers, and two pages of telegraphed reports on the situation in Viet-Nam and Cambodia. Fuller reports would be supplied later, during the plane journey.

The President took the lift, smiling at young Lupe Guerrero, the lift-girl. She was quite overcome; she had spent half a week's wages on a permanent wave in Kennedy's honour, and was delighted at being noticed.

Despite the night's fine rain, a small crowd had been waiting since three in the morning in front of the hotel doors. When Kennedy came out, there were about 10,000.

A teen-ager who had been there since dawn began shouting:

"Jack, Jack, come here. I want to touch you. I love you. We all love you . . ." Her name was Lila Lazo.

The greater part of the crowd was waiting in a car-park whose proprietor had put it at the disposal of the Democrat Party organisation. A temporary platform had been erected, and Kennedy went towards it, shaking hands and smiling acknowledgement of the increasingly hysterical cheers. Near the platform were Vice-President Johnson, Governor Connally, Senator Yarborough and other politicians.

Kennedy was wearing a grey flannel suit, without coat or hat. As the rain had begun again, a supporter offered him a raincoat, but he refused with a smile:

"I'm all right. I don't need it."

He began to speak, without notes:

"Our hearts are strong . . . Thanks to the town of Fort Worth, we are militarily the most powerful nation in the world . . . Soon we shall shoot into Space an even more formidable rocket than the Russian ones . . . Space is a new Ocean . . . and no-one must get ahead of us there. Next year we shall be first in every field." He finished with more praise of Fort Worth, and got down from the platform to walk back through the delirious crowd.

A GROUP of Democrats had paid \$3 each to attend a political breakfast with the President in the ballroom of the Texas Hotel. The price was a nominal one; the tickets had been changing hands on the black market at \$15 to \$20.

Kennedy went back for a moment to his suite before joining his audience. He probably wanted to ask Jacqueline to hurry up, as her absence had been noticed. He also made several telephone calls. It is supposed that he talked with his brother Bob, in Washington.

He went down again, to the lounge, to greet a group of notables, and then led them into the ballroom. It was exactly nine o'clock. An orchestra of pupils from a local

high school played the presidential anthem, "Hail to the Chief".

Kennedy was seated in the centre of the table of honour. Breakfast was served. Having already had his, Kennedy just went through the motions of eating. He was used to this bit of play-acting, his doctor having forbidden him to eat food served at banquets in hotels or other public places.

Things were at the coffee stage when at last Jacqueline appeared, doll-like in pink, and took her place beside her husband. She received a tremendous ovation.

Jacqueline excused her lateness: "I travel light, and have to do my own hair."

There was nothing very remarkable in Kennedy's speech. It was much the same as before: he covered the same ground, making flattering allusions to the town and its more prominent citizens. He spoke partly from notes, partly extempore. But this Fort Worth speech must become part of history because these were to be John Fitzgerald Kennedy's last public words.

He spoke again of the power of America, and of the aeroplanes made at Fort Worth. His elder brother, Joseph, had been in one of them, a Liberator, at the time of his death in the last war; and as if on a sudden inspiration Kennedy went on to speak of "the very dangerous and uncertain world in which we live . . ."

He broke off abruptly after that phrase. The audience remained pensive and silent, and did not applaud as he left the room.

THE PRESIDENTIAL procession went slowly towards the Carswell Air Base, madly cheered all the way. Kennedy and his wife shook hands hundreds of times before boarding the aircraft. The plane took off at 11.24. Kennedy went to the front, where there was a separate compartment with table, armchairs, two beds and a cloakroom.

Fort Worth is separated from Dallas by only some thirty-five miles of motorway through the desert. But the two towns are bitter rivals, careful to ignore each other's existence; it was good politics to arrive in Dallas by plane, as if coming directly from Washington, or at least from far away.

The plane journey also gave some opportunity to recoup oneself. The press used it to have a drink – much needed, the bars at Fort Worth being closed – and to read through their notes.

Vice-President Johnson had his own special plane. The rule is that president and vice-president should never travel in the same one, so as to avoid a succession crisis in the case of accident. He used the opportunity to talk over Texan problems with his friends, and to arrange the evening's big reception at his ranch.

Kennedy himself studied important dossiers sent from Washington, signed a number of letters, including the telegram of good wishes to Winston Churchill, then began to read the morning's newspapers.

Among the dailies was the *New York Herald Tribune*, which he had banned for over a year from the White House because it criticised him more than he liked. Now he had changed his mind, and read it each morning.

Finally, he began to make notes on the manuscript of the Dallas speech, the text already distributed to the press and others attending – but Kennedy liked to make last-minute alterations.

THIS SAME morning, at Tampa, Florida, John E. Maguire was collecting signatures to an address to the President of the United States, thanking him for his visit of some days before. Maguire was altogether suited for this task, it having been Kennedy who had appointed him "Marshall"

– roughly equivalent to Chief Constable – of Central Florida.

He had known the President for twenty years; since, in fact, as radio-telegraphist second-class he had been one of the crew of the naval patrol boat PTB 109, commanded by Lieutenant Kennedy.

Maguire could go to Washington to see the President whenever he liked. The White House door was always open to him. So it was to William Johnson, who that morning (despite his fifty-three years and his stomach ulcer) was driving a lorry at Waltham, Massachusetts, for a petrol company. Johnson had also served on PTB 109, and with him Charles A. Harris, called "Buckley", the ship's gunner, who was that morning making shoes in a Boston factory.

Machinist Gerald E. Zinser, a postal employee in Florida, and Saul Edgar Mauer, for eighteen months now confined to a military hospital because of a nervous condition, could not hope to see their old commander again.

A further member of the crew, Maurice Kowal, worked in a cemetery. He was the sailor Kennedy saved from certain death at risk of his own life, when PTB 109 was wrecked.

FOR THE crew and their commander came within inches of a horrible death one moonless night in the Blackett Straits in the Solomon Islands, some fifty miles from their regular base of Randova, south of New Georgia.

It was a little after midnight, on August 2nd, 1943. PTB 109 was on patrol, the second in command, George Ross, at the helm. Suddenly, out of the darkness surged the *Amagiri*, a Japanese destroyer, heading at 30 knots for the American boat. It cut it in two and went on its way without slowing up for a second.

Two members of the crew were killed instantly, and two others wounded. Kennedy was thrown on to the bridge.

The boat did not sink, but the sea was aflame. It was expected that help would come quickly, but the rest of the flotilla went on, believing them lost.

During the following night, the vessel went down and the crew swam towards a small deserted island. Kennedy, an excellent swimmer, towed one of the wounded, holding the sailor's life-jacket between his teeth. Having got him ashore, Lieutenant Kennedy did not stop for rest, but plunged back into the water, carrying a lantern. All night long he swam around in the Ferguson Passage, much used by naval units, hoping to be able to signal to one of them, but without success. He went back to his men. The third night, they all managed to get to another island.

Next day, Kennedy and Ross found some water and biscuits left behind by the Japanese. There was also a canoe, which they tried to use, but a storm swept them off course.

Natives came to their aid and gave them a stronger boat. Kennedy scratched a brief message on a coconut shell, indicating their position and asking for help, and gave it to a group of natives who promised to go to Randova.

Kennedy and his second in command then tried to get back to their comrades, but the boat foundered. They were saved a second time from certain death by the island people.

It was not until the seventh day that at last they were brought a letter from Randova . . . a few hours later they were rescued.

Admiral Halsey gave Kennedy a mention in despatches, and he was decorated for valour. Unfortunately, he fell victim to malaria, and had to give up active service. In December he returned to the United States, and was confined to a military hospital until Autumn 1944.

ALREADY, WHILE at Harvard University (where he was in the champion swimming team and the rugby team)

Kennedy as a young student had seriously injured his spine. For this reason, the Army would not accept him at the outbreak of war. But Kennedy did not want to be an enforced civilian. Thanks to the influence of his family, he obtained a Naval command.

The adventure in the waters of the Pacific aggravated his physical condition. Later, he had to undergo a whole series of painful operations, two of which involved risk of death. He had to learn to walk with crutches, and even at the White House he had always to put up with a very strict regimen under the direction of Dr Travell. His rocking-chair, therefore, was not a paternalist symbol but a therapeutic necessity.

Every cloud has its silver lining: a long stay in hospital in 1955 enabled Kennedy to write a book prophetically titled *Profiles in Courage*, which brought him the Pulitzer Prize.

WHEN I think of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, I see him alighting from his plane at Texas, hatless and coatless, red hair flying in the wind. He wanted to brave the elements in just the same way as he wanted to brave the ups and downs of politics.

For him, life was a continual challenge, which he accepted with an unchanging enthusiasm each day and night – like a skier who plunges down from the height of the track to leap into the void.

His one really big worry was time:

"I've so much to do," he would say. "I shall never manage to finish it all in four years . . . Even in eight, I'll have to hurry."

Power had brought about a physical change in him. He had got fatter, his cheeks were full, there were dark circles around his eyes. He often gave the impression of being very tired, discouraged, disillusioned. But he remained an idealist, and above all a man young in spirit.

His fondness for children was endearing; he would often interrupt an important conference to go to the next floor to see what "John-John" was doing. (He called the boy that because he did not like Jack, the baptismal name; still less "Johnny" or "Junior").

Prominent on his table there were always boxes of sweets, for John and Caroline to dip into. The children could come and see him often throughout the day, and not only for the benefit of photographers. His favourite game was to take "John-John" in his arms and whisper in his ear; then the little boy would hiss in his father's ear a vague "buzz-buzz" – and father and son would burst into hearty laughter. It was their "secret".

THE EVENTS of November 22nd, 1963 have created a Kennedy myth. Attempts have been made to turn him into another Lincoln, a genius, a pioneer or an idol.

We ought not to anticipate the verdict of history. It will not be possible for a long time to make a true evaluation of his uncompleted work. Let us, for the moment, just note that on this Friday morning of his journey to Dallas, he was under critical fire for many reasons. The Republican group in the Senate had recently published a statement which called his presidency the worst since Harding's.

Kennedy was very irritated by criticisms of this kind; perhaps his desire for repeated renewal of contact with the crowds was rooted in a need of re-assurance.

Despite family, friends and admirers, a president is appallingly alone. He is perhaps the most isolated man in the world. His is a hard calling; and, as Truman once said to me. "Each year at the White House is an eternity."

I remember Kennedy on the evening when he thanked his supporters for having chosen him as their candidate for the presidency; the atmosphere in the Los Angeles Stadium was hysterical. He still had a boyish face then. You wouldn't

have thought that it was the future president of the United States up there. He looked more like a page who had just come up with a message, and then, suddenly drunk (as in some film comedy), grabbed the microphone. Near him was his mother, Rose Kennedy.

THIS *mater dolorosa* has been much neglected since the Dallas tragedy; it was the young and lovely Jacqueline Kennedy, by her husband's side at the time, who caught the public imagination. But does a mother suffer less because she was not there when her son died?

Rose Fitzgerald, daughter of a famous politician, had had the great joy of seeing her John elected to the highest office in the country; any mother would wish her son one day to be president, and Rose had wanted it more than any other. But she had had to pay dearly for that satisfaction.

Her eldest son, Joseph, a bomber-pilot in Europe, left his English base on August 12th, 1944 never to return. That same year, her daughter Kathleen, wife of the Marquis of Hartington, was widowed; she was to die in her turn in 1948, in an air disaster in the south of France.

Rosemary Kennedy, the eldest of the four Kennedy daughters, has always been mentally handicapped; she is under care in a Wisconsin sanatorium. The family very bravely revealed this secret in order to encourage the creation of a vast fund in aid of retarded children.

On December 19th, 1961, Rose's husband, Joseph P. Kennedy, succumbed to an apoplectic attack which almost completely paralyzed him. He was the *deus ex machina* of the clan. He had built up an immense fortune by daring and not always orthodox speculation, become an Ambassador, dominated the Democrat Party and determined to make not just one of his sons president, but all four of them in succession.

It so chanced that I met the elder Kennedy in a famous

clinic on 34th Street in New York. He was undergoing a special course of therapy in an annexe filled with wonderful apparatus specially devised for him. Kennedy Senior, alas, was unable to move a single muscle, and could close his eyes only with difficulty. It will never be known whether he understood all that happened at Dallas and after.

"I STARTED in politics," John Kennedy once said, "because Joe died. If something happened to me tomorrow, my brother Bobby would take my place, and if Bobby died too Teddy would succeed him."

It was, indeed, a matter of a veritable dynasty, conceived in the mind of the father. Kennedy Senior did not only train his eight children tirelessly towards his ambitious objectives; he made good use of his wealth and connections, his aptitude for intrigue, and all the social, family and religious advantages to establish his children in the front rank.

Joseph Kennedy must bitterly have regretted not having lived in earlier times, when the Hapsburgs, Capets and Romanoffs founded Empires to pass on to their issue.

Everything, then, had been organised for Joseph, the eldest. When the Liberator crashed somewhere over Germany, Kennedy Senior had only to change the label: it was for the second son, John, to take up the standard.

One morning in January 1960, Kennedy Senior went to see his friend "Uncle Dan" O'Connell, one of the patrons of the Democrat Party.

"Dan, I've come to ask for votes for my son . . ."

"He's rather young, your John," was the answer.

"Yes, I know. But *I'm* seventy-two, and I want to be there to enjoy his conquest . . ."

He was there, but not for long.

It is said of him that he was the *eminence grise* of the White House, that nothing was decided without his being

consulted, that the Government was really a Regency – his; even that the United States were ruled collectively by the Kennedys.

EVENTS PROVED that John Kennedy grew in stature as a statesman after his father was incapacitated, and that he could manage very well without a mentor.

He remained in power for only a little more than a thousand days. But he proved capable of confronting two great crises with authority. The first was Cuba; the second was during the summer of 1963, when several days before the negro protest march on Washington he dared to throw overboard the politicians' prudence and confront the nation squarely with its moral responsibility.

He did not want to win the cold war. He wanted, on the contrary, to make the Americans realise that it was madness to let themselves be dominated by dread of it. He wanted to make them grasp the fact that the future of the country, and of the world, depended upon an honourable understanding with the Soviets.

He was not a theorist. His philosophy was simple: to defend Freedom, keep his sense of humour, live his life fully and tackle the highest peaks. He considered himself something of a mountain guide.

As a Senator he had been rather shy, and absent a good deal of the time; he transformed himself into an excellent administrator and brilliant diplomat – and also a magnet to men. He knew how to surround himself with brilliant people, and how to make them share in his own enthusiasm and vitality. He was not first-class, but had great respect for the first-class in others.

Like all other presidents in American history, he did not speak any foreign language, yet he was the most international of the masters of the White House.

The ballet sent him to sleep; but he wanted very much

to encourage it, to create an American tradition. He preferred reading detective stories, but surrounded himself with great writers and chose the old poet Robert Frost to read a poem at his inauguration.

In many spheres he was mediocre, but he knew it; and knew that what mattered was to recognise the existence of a higher level, which he must try to attain. After all, Lorenzo the Magnificent was not poet, painter or sculptor either.

He was a *promoter*, an impresario, rather than a statesman, a political leader or a ruler; one of those men who inspire, organise, utilise the talent of others for great ends.

JOHN FITZGERALD Kennedy was born on May 29th, 1917 at Brooklyn, Massachusetts, but his education was entirely Bostonian. He was very proud of having that accent, and often noticeably stressed it.

His studies at Harvard therefore counted enormously; and he showed a remarkable loyalty to his *alma mater*. It was enough to be a Harvard graduate to be something in his administration.

But he also studied at the London School of Economics, during his father's term as Ambassador there. He even acted as private secretary to Kennedy Senior, just before the war. He had already written and published a rather critical thesis on the English policy of temporisation.

After his war-time adventures and discharge from hospital, he went back to London as a war correspondent. At the end of hostilities, he went into active politics, standing for Congress in Boston in 1946.

He went to Washington at the age of twenty-seven. It was just a spring-board. In 1952 he challenged Henry Cabot Lodge (the same who was later to be a candidate for the vice-presidency with Nixon) for the Senate. Lodge



Above left, No. 1 suspect Lee Oswald in a photograph which his mother claims is a fake. *Right*, with his Russian-born wife Marina and *bottom left* in the uniform of an Air Cadet. *Bottom right*, Marina Oswald with her baby and mother-in-law, Marguerite Oswald, leave Dallas jail after questioning



belonged to a very old American family; he represented tradition, aristocracy, prestige.

Kennedy was elected.

Some years later, he spoke of the presidency, and let it be known that he would temporarily accept the vice-presidency. But fortunately for him – since the Democrats were beaten – no one took him very seriously.

The climate was very different in 1960.

Kennedy Senior had prepared the ground very thoroughly, and there was no “strong” candidate. Kennedy began well in advance, going up and down all over the country. From the first he was convincing and people began to take notice. Then some started to get worried.

“He is too young, lacks experience,” Truman said of him publicly. But Youth worked for him – the young have votes too.

“He’s a Catholic,” said the professionals, and quoted the unhappy precedent of Al Smith in 1928. But America’s Catholics had profited by the lesson of the past. They knew how to concentrate their forces, and bigotry was no longer widespread.

The negroes and Jews voted for him, in the hope that one day it would become possible to vote for a black or a Jewish president.

Kennedy – helped by his brothers, his sisters, his brothers in law, his sisters in law, his friends in Hollywood and on Broadway, in Wall Street, Boston and Harvard, and by his irresistible charm on television – was elected, the youngest president in the history of the United States. He had achieved what he had so passionately wanted.

“HE NEVER took himself too seriously,” his intimate friend Benjamin Bradley says of him. “He loved stories against himself.”

In fact, a disc on which an unknown actor, Vaughn

G



The moment of death for Lee Oswald. Night-club owner Jack Ruby steps forward with a gun as the President's alleged assassin is escorted by Dallas police officers



Meador, imitated his voice and made fun of a *soirée* at the White House, had a phenomenal success because Kennedy himself praised it highly during a press conference.

"He got into tremendous rages and broke everything in sight," says Arthur Schlesinger. "His rages lasted four minutes. On the fifth, he forgot it."

Despite his exacting calling, Kennedy knew how to guard the privacy of his family life. He would take pains over such small details as the renting of his villa, and the author's rights in a film on his life. He always found time to telephone his nieces and nephews to wish them a "happy birthday".

His love for his brothers, Bob especially, was unlimited. The boys were always fighting, and trying to out-do each other, but it was all in affectionate rivalry.

Kennedy never allowed the slightest remark against a member of the family. "The Boston Mafia", as it was called in Washington, had total respect for the code of family unity.

Perhaps, under professed admiration for Freedom, Kennedy was at the bottom of his heart something of the dictator. Congress bored him; he had not the slightest esteem for his erstwhile colleagues. Indeed, the sole big set-backs of his term of office were due to his inability to persuade them to approve his projects. It was perhaps that vague tendency to totalitarianism which made him (in a letter written in 1938) express some admiration of the régime of Benito Mussolini.

Would John Kennedy have become president without his father's \$200,000,000 to \$400,000,000 (no-one knows just how much); or the prestige of his paternal grandfather; or the particular set of political circumstances prevailing in 1960?

What does it matter?

He knew how to galvanise the American people, and

after saving them from one risk of atomic destruction, to canalise their energies towards the spiritual "new frontiers" which would certainly – had he been able to remain at the helm – have brought about a decisive transformation of the whole national life.

Despite their elegance of style, his speeches always produced a great effect on the crowds. But they do not allow us to divine his real thoughts. For, alas, though it is hard to understand why men who have attained great heights should need "ghosts" to write their speeches, Kennedy had specialised assistants to do this for him. He approved the texts, certainly, and made alterations, but that doesn't change the fact that he read them as an actor declaims his rôle, and not as an author does his own work.

There is, however, a slogan which characterises the real Kennedy, the Kennedy who still lives on in the memory of those who knew, loved or admired him:

"Do not ask –" he said on the day of his inauguration to the presidency, before the steps of the Capitol – "Do not ask what the country can do for you. Ask yourself what you can do for your country."

WITHIN A few minutes, the blue and gold plane would land at Dallas, where his rendezvous with Destiny awaited him: John Fitzgerald Kennedy was that day to receive an answer to his own question.

The Chatelaine

WHEN JACQUELINE STEPPED from the plane – which had touched down gently on the tarmac at Love Field, Dallas, promptly at 11.30 – the Mayor's wife presented her with a magnificent bouquet of red roses . . .

"Three times that day in Texas we were greeted with bouquets of the yellow roses of Texas. Only in Dallas they gave me red roses. I remember thinking: How funny – red roses for me," the First Lady was to say when at last she was able to look back on things quietly.

The yellow rose, indeed, is the emblem of Texas. A folksong dating from the Civil War, which is to all intents and purposes a national anthem, tells of "The Yellow Rose of Texas" – the young girl waiting at home for the warrior's return.

"Come, you'll be welcomed with love, like a hero," it says.

A college band was playing this ballad at the airport, but the music was drowned by the happy cheers of the crowds.

WHILE JACQUELINE was receiving her bouquet of red roses, Lee Harvey Oswald was on the fifth floor of the Texas Book Depository building, eating a chicken sandwich brought with him from Irving. The sandwich had been wrapped up in the same thick brown paper which shrouded the long parcel.

Oswald, too, had got up early, at about six-thirty. He drank some black coffee, which he made for himself, and went (without saying good-bye to wife or children – they were all asleep) to the garage of his work-mate, Wesley Frazier.

Marina would be late rising this morning; she had had to get up twice during the night to see to the new baby, and was tired out.

Mrs William Randall, Frazier's sister, was at her window – it was about half-past seven – and saw Oswald with that long brown-paper parcel. It was long indeed: about a yard or so. At the time she didn't take any particular notice; lots of people carry parcels.

Frazier saw it, too.

"What have you got there, Lee?" he asked straight out.

"Curtain-rods," replied Oswald, without further explanation.

"That was our only conversation that morning," reports Frazier. "But Oswald was taciturn. The only time he ever talked was when someone asked after his children. Then he would laugh, tell you all about them, and show you photos of them . . .

"We got to work about eight o'clock," Frazier's account continues. "Oswald said hello and went off. That was the last time I saw him."

There are two lifts in the Texas Book Depository building. The one at the front, to the right of the entrance door, is automatic; it is mostly used by the officer workers. On the other side of the building, reached either from the courtyard or by passing through the main ground-floor office, is a goods lift worked by a lever. It is not much used except for loads of books. It seems reasonable to suppose that Oswald went up in it to the fifth floor, since no one can swear to having seen him that morning.

The fifth floor is like a huge barn, with no walls except

the exterior ones. The room must be over a hundred yards long, and about sixty-five wide. The books are piled up like bricks, forming partitions; there are, too, some metal filing-cabinets which also divide up some areas. It is therefore difficult to see from the lift what is happening in the more distant sections, alongside the windows, or inside the "rooms" formed by the walls of books and filing-cabinets. You could, in fact, live for days on end in some corners without ever being discovered.

To get a clear view of this labyrinth you would have to take down all the books, which would take at least a week.

It would have been perfectly possible for someone with evil intentions to go up the previous evening, spend the night there, and get away again – especially if he had an accomplice in the place.

PRESIDENT KENNEDY had already taken his place in the Lincoln-Continental GG300; but Jacqueline was still shaking hands, talking to people in the crowd, saying "Thank you" again and again. The President decided to go and get her; he took her gently by the hand and tried to lead her towards the car. He had to start shaking hands all over again, passing close by the placard proclaiming *Let's bury King John*. Someone in that crowd must have been the last person to shake hands with John Kennedy.

Jacqueline had been late to the official breakfast that morning because she could not make up her mind whether to wear the pink suit, or a thin dress with a fur coat – a magnificent leopardskin, a tribute from the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. But she remembered what the Somali Ambassador, Muhallim, had said to her; it is well known, of course, that the Ethiopians and Somalis are bitter enemies.

"Above all, don't wear the leopard in Texas," he had begged her. "They'll all want to imitate you, thousands

will be ordered, and there will be another massacre – just when we are trying to prevent the species becoming extinct."

Since, anyway, the temperature was rising in Dallas, Jacqueline decided in the end not to wear the fur coat. A First Lady is always having to cope with such diplomatic dilemmas; the smallest thing may have weight.

AT ABOUT the same time, the next Sunday's issue of the magazine *Parade* was being distributed to forty or so of the great dailies throughout America.

Parade, like *This Week*, belongs to a class of weeklies which constitutes a phenomenon peculiar to American journalism. They have colossal circulations – 10,000,000 in the case of *Parade* – and are printed weeks in advance. Each daily is sent a number corresponding to its own circulation, and the magazine is clipped into the pages of the Sunday edition, as a free "extra".

This new number had a big front-page article under the appetising title *Is Jackie Tired of the White House?* The theme was not new, but one wonders why just that moment was chosen to return to it.

Referring to her as "the Cleopatra of the Potomac" – the Potomac is the river which runs by Washington – it said that her high-and-mighty ways had made her many enemies in the capital.

She issues a kind of imperial ban against anyone she does not like; as, for instance, in the case of Nina Steers, barred from the White House for being pro-Nixon. Nina is vaguely related to her by marriage; her mother married Hugh Auchincloss, who after parting from her married Jacqueline's mother.

Jacqueline disliked many facets of being a president's wife. She hated electioneering, had no respect at all for the double-dealing of politicians, and for a long time regarded the White House as a mouldering cage.

In fact, she was not really happy except when she was travelling, or hunting in Virginia.

THE AMERICAN press – so prompt to publish photos of Queen Elizabeth with skirts flying, or Prince Philip talking with a shopgirl – observes the completest taboo on the private life of the presidential couple.

The president has at his service a highly skilled outfit whose official title is "Press Secretariat". In reality, they are nothing but blatant publicity agents; they know very well how to erect a wall of silence where most needed.

The White House is not just another source of news among many. It is an important centre, with a hundred journalists permanently accredited to it. They live there all day, and often stay there all night. They have no other duty but to follow the president around and receive his pronouncements.

For these journalists, the White House is a career. You can't be a hero all the time; it would not be easy to risk your agreeable, profitable and useful job, perhaps have to move house, leave Washington or even the U.S.A., because you had violated a taboo. In any case, such details of private life, even a president's, for the most part are unimportant. If we are to violate these taboos it is to enable all the roles in this drama to be properly focused.

DESPITE HER undeniable charm and model-girl figure, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy was neither the most beautiful nor the youngest mistress of the White House.

Dolly Madison was most attractive, and many men lost their heads over her. The very lovely Frances Folsom was married in the Blue Room on June 2nd, 1886, at the age of twenty-one, to President Grover Cleveland. Another girl of twenty-one, not, however, anything like so beautiful as Frances Folsom, married President John Tyler.

Jacqueline was born on July 28th, 1929 at Southampton, a very fashionable place on the Atlantic coast, about a hundred miles from New York; high society goes there as in Europe they would go to Biarritz or San Remo. The Bouviers, indeed, belong to the "pure" aristocracy of America.

That word "aristocracy" may cause some smiles on the other side of the Atlantic, since in America everyone is of obscure origins, and many of the great fortunes arise from Stock Exchange speculations only more or less honest. But the great adventurers of the last century, the captains of industry, the masters of Wall Street, the gold-prospectors and some few descendants of political leaders, consider themselves an *élite*, the Nation's nobility, and live in a strange little world of their own.

John V. Bouvier, "Jackie's" father, came from people who lived in a small Provençal village, but was himself a stockbroker. Her mother, Janet Lee, also "of very good family", remarried after the death of her first husband, to Hugh D. Auchincloss, also a financier.

"Jackie" is very close to her sister, her adopted sister, her half-brother and her two adopted brothers, but due to the various divorces and widowhoods the family ties are rather involved.

She was only just ten when her parents were divorced; but she was brought up in the best private schools in America. She did her undergraduate studies at Vassar (the *nec plus ultra* of the American girl). She took a course at the Sorbonne, staying meanwhile at a *pension* in the rue Vaugirard. She also stayed for a time in an art school in Venice, and after returning to Washington took a course in journalism at the university there. She speaks French quite well, can get by in Italian, is not bad at Spanish and can even manage a little Latin.

Despite the strong disapproval of her father, who died not

long after, Jacqueline got herself a job as a photo-reporter on the *Washington Post*. She stopped people on the street to ask their views on current affairs. She was, of course, used to interviewing top people; the other reporters were not at all pleased. They called her "this little rich girl playing at being a reporter", and described her as cold and distant.

Like so many girls of her class, Jacqueline professed an inverted snobbery, in favour of anything labelled "culture" and everything European. Thirty years ago, rich heiresses wanted to marry impoverished Counts and Marquises, and to dance the Charleston in Trafalgar Square. Now they want to see Ionesco's plays, hear Stravinsky and dine with Pinter – and for them the real "great world" is that of the intellectuals. All this is by way of reaction against the philistinism of the American masses, who understand nothing of such things; they go to Broadway to see the leg-shows, spend their evenings watching television and never read any but best-selling writers.

With her flowing chestnut hair, doe-like eyes, and soft voice (she murmurs rather than talks) Jacqueline looks the arch-type of that American ideal, "the girl next door". Her temperament, however, is very different from what the American women's magazines call "the typical American woman". She can be headstrong and impatient, hates housework and cooking, and is bored by the cocktail parties of the capital. Neither can she bear the affections of political ladies. If the President's wife and the Vice-President's sat side by side their silences could be disturbing.

LEGEND SAYS that Jacqueline came to know the young Senator Kennedy through being sent to photograph him for her paper. It is more likely that they were often thrown together in the salons of the capital. Washington is a very provincial city, where they could hardly not meet.

He courted her ardently.

When the rich, attractive and ambitious young politician proposed, it was thought that she had made the catch of the year.

The Bouviers themselves didn't think so at all. They regarded the Kennedys as peasants, being Irish; and as newly-rich, the father's fortune being of such recent date. Worst of all, they were Democrats. It is even said that one reason why Kennedy so much wanted to become president was in order to prove to his in-laws how very wrong they had been.

Jacqueline was bored to death during the first months at the White House. She could not simply spend all her time painting in the grounds, drawing caricatures of her husband and reading Byron. But her husband suggested that she should restyle each of the 107 rooms of the residence on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Jacqueline set to work with a will, renewing everything, removing the tasteless *bric à brac* accumulated over nearly a century. Then she gave a kind of world-wide housewarming, with a television programme in which she acted as guide.

The telecast had a tremendous success, making Jacqueline appear in a rather fairy-tale aspect – the chatelaine whose smile irradiated those so-historical premises. She was that indeed: a chatelaine who with grace and exquisite manners received kings, presidents, writers, philosophers, explorers, patrons of art, actors, astronauts, queens and princesses. Never before had Washington known such splendour. Casals came to give a concert. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was performed. It was Jacqueline who arranged for the Mona Lisa to visit Washington.

All this also gave rise to strong criticism. She was accused of sacrilege in having made alterations to the White House, and of being unfaithful to the national sport, Baseball, in favour of foreign and esoteric pastimes.

But Jacqueline liked flouting public opinion. She dared to appear in a simple woollen coat in the middle of January, when it was freezing; the American middle-class (who believe absolutely that you aren't a success if you haven't a mink coat) were horrified at seeing a president's wife dressed "like a typist". It would have been useless to try to explain to them that a Lanvin coat is quite as smart as any fur in the world.

She was criticised for buying her clothes in Paris, and for spending more than \$30,000 a year there.

"If that's true," she replied a little tartly, "it's because my underwear is made of sable."

Although there were many divorces in the family, Jacqueline's own adherence to the Catholic faith is sincere.

"I don't like praying in public," she says. "Religion is a matter of conscience." But she was brought up along strict lines, and considers her first and most important duty to be the moral training of her children.

She adores those children. For her, they come before everything. If they need her, she will neglect any other task at all, any party or amusement. She will get up several times during the night to see that all is as it should be in their room.

"A child," she says, "should be surrounded with love, security and discipline; but he must follow his instinct. The growth of a child should give us joy."

She had paid a great price for the joy of being the mother of little John and of Caroline. She has been known to have had at least two miscarriages, one in 1954, and one in 1956 (during her husband's first presidential approach). Then, on August 7th, 1963 she gave birth to her second son, Patrick Bouvier Kennedy. It was a premature birth, and despite a Caesarian operation and the efforts of the best doctors Patrick died two days later.

After that, Jacqueline wanted to get away from Washing-

ton. She went to join her sister in Greece; then stayed on, in spite of her husband's pleas that she should come back. At last she did so. Two days before the visit to Dallas, she made her first social appearance, inviting more than seven hundred people to the White House.

Jacqueline always loved her husband madly. She often teased him, imitated his accent, made fun of his not always distinguished tastes, called him a vulgarian; and when someone asked him "What sort of music do you like, Mr President?" replied for him: "The presidential anthem." But still she loved him madly.

"I like to read history books," she was to confide later to the writer Theodore H. White, "because it was history which made Jack what he was. You must think of him as a little sick boy, who reads and reads. For Jack, history was a procession of heroes. That is how it was that history transformed him. My husband saw the heroic everywhere. Men are a mixture of good and bad; Jack had an ideal view of history - his world was peopled with heroes . . ."

JACQUELINE HAD one quality which her husband admired most of all: her self-control. She knew how to face up to the most adverse moments with calm and reserve. She knew how to keep a hold on herself.

In a few minutes, when the presidential car was to turn the corner of Houston and Elm Streets in Dallas, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy would need to call upon all that self-control.

CHAPTER EIGHT

'They're Going to Kill Us All!'

"YOU CAN'T SAY NOW," said Governor Connally's wife, turning towards the President as the car rounded the corner from Houston Street into Elm Street, "that the people of Dallas don't love you, and aren't glad to see you."

"No, no-one can say that any more," John Kennedy answered.

They were his last words. At that moment, the first bullet hit him. He lifted a hand to his throat.

Jacqueline, who was smiling and waving to some people on the other side of the road, turned back towards him, to see what was happening. The chauffeur looked up at the small bridge, trying to see what had caused the noise.

Kennedy slumped down in the back of the car, and Jacqueline cried:

"Oh my God! They've killed my husband. Jack ... Jack!"

That was when Governor Connally turned to the right. He was to say later:

"The President had blood on his cheeks. He said nothing. Then a bullet hit me in the shoulder. I knew that the wound was serious. I tried to get up, but collapsed into the arms of my wife. It was then that I heard a third shot, maybe a fourth. I saw that the President had been hit again. I cried out: 'My God, they're going to kill us all'."

It was exactly twelve-thirty-one, Texas time. The history

'THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US ALL!'

III

of the United States stopped short then, like the mechanism of an electronic computer when the current is abruptly cut off.

Kennedy's blood was spattered on Jacqueline's dress. It was on her stockings, on the seats, on the carpet. Throwing down her bouquet of red roses, she took her husband's head in her arms, still managing to make desperate signals to the men of the "Queen Mary" behind.

For there were no guards at the side of the car when it happened. Bill Greer, the chauffeur, had slowed down. Behind, on the running-board of the "Queen Mary", agent Clint Hill saw what had happened – he was still looking in the direction of the bridge – and decided to go to the aid of the Kennedys. He leapt from the running-board, ran on and caught up with the presidential car, putting one foot on the rear bumper. He slipped, but managed to keep hold of the handle of the boot and kept on running.

At that moment the chauffeur came out of his stupor, said, "Let's get the hell out of here!" and put on speed.

Mrs Kennedy was still holding her husband in her arms, as if to protect him with her body. She looked round, and saw that Hill was not yet in the car.

"Help me! My God, help me!" she called out to him, as if in reproach. Then, laying her husband's head on the car-seat, she turned and climbed on to the luggage compartment, lay flat and held out her right hand to Hill. She was holding on with her feet; her nylon stockings turned slowly red.

Hill climbed into the car. He pushed Jacqueline into the back again, and snatched up the telephone.

"The President has been shot," he reported to headquarters. "Which is the nearest hospital?"

The presidential car shot like a rocket into the motorway,

at a speed of 100 m.p.h. Policeman Hill punched the metal of the car several times with his fist in his agitation.

The film taken by amateur photographer Zapruder proves that the whole drama lasted exactly sixteen seconds. An eternity in history.

At the time when the first rifle shot rang out – for at that distance, it could only have been from a rifle – the presidential car was moving very slowly. It was exactly eleven yards beyond the junction of Houston and Elm Streets; and on a direct line between the furthest right-hand window of the fifth floor of the Texas Book Depository building and the foot of the bridge over the motorway, on the other side of the avenue.

Because the chauffeur slowed down still more, and even stopped for a moment after the second shot, the car did not travel much more than thirty yards during the whole of this unbelievable episode. But it all happened so quickly that nobody had a clear view of what occurred.

Tailor Zapruder was filming, as so often happens, without really seeing what the camera was recording, because he was concentrating so hard on not losing sight of his subject.

Some cars had cut through the procession to reach the centre lane of the three turning off the motorway. It seems fantastic, but not one of the drivers saw anything, although the fourth bullet must only just have missed hitting one of them.

Charles Brehm tells how he saw Kennedy's face alter, change colour and then fall to one side.

Mary Norman, who was using her instant-print camera to photograph Kennedy, shouted:

"My God, they've shot him."

David Miller, dissatisfied with his first photographs of the President, had meanwhile run round the Texas Book Depository building and arrived at the side of the motor-

way. So it came about that he saw a car with the American flag and a blue and gold pennant come tearing along flanked by police motor cyclists. Without proper view-finding, he levelled his camera and took a photograph which must be the most striking of all the pictures taken that day . . .

It shows the policeman, Hill, standing in the back of the car trying to calm Jacqueline and telling her to keep her head down (there could well have been other attempts, or accomplices further along the route). Mrs Connally is huddled up in the bottom of the car, covering her unconscious husband. The President's body is lying on the back seat, but one of his feet remains caught on the top of the car. Another Secret Service man, sitting next to the chauffeur, has turned round to see what is going on, and cannot believe his own eyes.

Young Miller did not know until later that he was the last person in the world to photograph Kennedy – at least, his foot. When he developed the film, he could not make it out; his father then told him about the assassination.

CHAUFFEUR BILL GREER was now following a Dallas police car, on the way to Parkland Hospital. The sirens which had been silenced all day so that the President could hear the people's cheers now screamed madly. The Secret Service "Queen Mary" followed. Its men now had their rifles and sub machine-guns at the ready, fingers on triggers.

Next came Vice-President Johnson's car. Policeman Rufus W. Youngblood was the only one of the occupants visible.

"I thought at first, like everyone else in the procession," he was to say later, "that some over-enthusiastic spectator had thrown a firework or let off a rocket. But from my point of view, this was an unusual noise, and the regulations laid down what I must do in such a case. I shouted to the

people in the car: 'Get down on the floor, quick', and repeated the same thing several times, even after they had all got down on the bottom of the car. I had taken the Vice-President by the shoulders and roughly pushed him down on the seat. Johnson didn't say even a word in protest. Then I shouted to the chauffeur: 'Damn it, get out of here'."

Agent Youngblood lay across Lyndon Johnson, covering him with his own body.

"I heard the three shots," said Mrs Johnson, "but I said to myself 'What a party! Now we've got rockets . . .' We were all so gay. Then I saw that President Kennedy had bent forward, and just then our Secret Service man ordered us to do the same. Senator Yarborough was lying right next to me, and he kept telling me: 'The President's been shot, the President's been shot.' But I wouldn't believe it, he must be having a nervous crisis, it was all unbelievable. Just like in the film *Seven Days in May*. Make-believe. Then, after an eternity, I raised my eyes and I read the word 'Hospital'."

LATER, WHEN he was decorated by Johnson personally, Rufus Youngblood explained modestly that he had done no more than follow regulations.

"I've been paid every month since 1951 for the job of defending with my life the man I have to protect."

His courage and presence of mind perhaps averted from the United States what would have been the gravest catastrophe in its history. Youngblood was not to know whether there were several assassins, or if it was planned to get rid of Johnson too; certainly, the man who had fired so rapidly and skilfully at Kennedy's car might well have decided to have a go at Johnson's. All the indications are that that was possible, even probable. Youngblood saved the situation.

The death of Johnson would have created a vacuum in Washington. His constitutional successor was a man of seventy-one, with no experience whatever of government and unknown to the masses: John W. McCormack, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

In the press car it was thought that Johnson had had a heart attack, and the rumour spread like a flash. Others said that an attempt had been made on his life, and that for security reasons the procession had nonetheless gone on to the Trade Mart, its destination. The pressmen therefore decided to go there.

A few reporters, however, chose instead to go and see what was happening on the lawns which lined Elm Street. Douglas Kiker was one. Supposing that there had been some disorders among the crowd – a negro demonstration, maybe – he began to run down the middle of the road, waving his press-card.

It was pandemonium here.

People were lying on the grass. There was shouting. Policemen were waving their guns. Secret Servicemen forcibly swept everyone out of their way, their machine-guns pointing upwards.

The negroes had concluded that right-wing extremists were about to massacre them all; they thought it was they who were being shot at from windows. The fathers among them had thrown themselves across their children, stretched on the grass. One of these negroes, John Draster, cried: "Lynch! They're going to lynch us!" and tried to run away, pulling his little girl by the hand. A policeman, revolver in hand, ordered him to stop and get down on the ground too; there might be more shooting.

Then there was an outcry from among the crowd:

"The assassin's been arrested." Police were swarming round a fair-haired young man.

Kiker met Marianne Means, a "Hearst" correspondent.

She looked desperate; great tears were rolling down her cheeks.

"Something's happened to Jack, something terrible. God help us!"

A secretary spoke to them; she was still automatically eating a ham roll, her lunch, without realising it, she was in such a state of shock.

"Yes, the President's been shot at," she said.

But journalist Kiker refused to believe her. "She's hysterical, like the rest of them," he thought.

There was no sign of the three official cars.

A photographer was taking pictures of a girl who had hidden herself behind a column, part of a small monument above the grassy slope.

Mary Norman had developed her "Polaroid" photo, and stared at it in amazement.

Journalist Kiker approached one of the police cars which had meanwhile drawn up alongside the pavement. The radio of one of them was turned on: A headquarters official was saying: "The President is wounded. He is being driven at top speed to Parkland Hospital. Protect the area."

Instantly another journalist, an agency representative, started to run for the entrance to the Texas Book Depository building, ahead of a policeman, and darted towards the telephone near the door. It was thus that the world received the first intimation of what had happened in Dallas on this terrible afternoon of November 22nd.

MORE THAN half the fifty-odd Secret Service men were still among the crowd at the scene of the tragedy but not a shot was fired. No cordons were set up. The Secret Service knew nothing at all of what was happening in the Texas Book Depository building. Just one or two men tried vaguely to go towards the bridge over the motorway.

Their confusion was painful to watch. For sixty years they had planned and practised a thousand times what should be done in the event of an assassination attempt. Now there they stood, like kids who have lost their parents.

The retired chief of the Service, U. E. Baughman, was later to ask why they did not riddle the windows of the building with bullets; why they did not instantly leap to the President's aid at the first shot, without waiting for Jacqueline Kennedy's calls for help.

Later the whole world was bitterly to reproach the Dallas police for having failed to protect the President, and for the sketchiness of their investigations. But the Secret Service, so distinguished in the intimidation of journalists, must bear a very great part of the responsibility for what happened.

MRS CONNALLY, believing her husband dead, was sobbing in the bottom of the car. Policeman Hill was still standing, and still telephoning. Jacqueline was weeping silently, pressing her husband's disfigured face to her breast, like a mother feeding her baby.

Her right stocking was saturated with blood, and her pretty pink dress stained all over . . . Mary Lincoln's dress was also pink that Good Friday evening at the Ford Theatre. Her pink dress, too, was splashed with blood . . .

THE PARKLAND Memorial Hospital, built in memory of the war-dead, is on the left-hand side of the motorway, half-way between the town centre and the airport. It is a huge modern building surrounded by trees, and is visible from very far off. It was here that Lee Harvey Oswald was cared for at the age of seven, after a car accident. And it was here that only a few weeks before his little girl had been born.

The presidential car stopped before the Emergency entrance. But there was a wait while attendants brought out

stretchers. The Secret Service men made a half-circle round the vehicle, sub machine-guns at the ready.

Vice-President Johnson got out of his car, one hand pressed against the small of his back, and went inside without looking round. He was dead white, and limping. Those who saw him like this at once thought that it was he who was the cause of all the alarm. Already Washington had been informed that he had succumbed to a heart attack.

After two interminable minutes, the stretcher-bearers came out. They saw to Connally first, then brought a stretcher close up to the car and laid Kennedy on it. Jacqueline went with them, holding on to the hem of her husband's jacket, and supported by a Secret Service man. The door closed behind them.

It was twelve-forty-two.

Senator Yarborough gave the impression that his hair had gone white in that quarter of an hour. He supported himself against the hospital wall, just under the *Ambulance* sign, as if to stop himself falling. He was weeping. It was like this that he faced the first journalists to arrive at the hospital after the fruitless call at the Trade Mart. The guests there had been told that there would be a delay in the programme, and that they should finish the banquet meanwhile. To stop them getting too impatient, Texan folk-music was played.

"I saw nothing," Yarborough said to the journalists. "But there was a smell of powder in the air everywhere. Kennedy and Connally are inside, in the Emergency room. It's too horrible to describe . . . their wounds are serious, very serious. It is a devilish act, a horror . . . I can't say any more . . ." And he wept, the right honourable and distinguished Senator of the highest parliamentary assembly of the United States, covering his face with his hands.

He went inside in his turn, followed by the thunderstruck journalists.

Where was everybody? This is the great unanswered question in Dallas and the police still do not like to discuss this point.

The Secret Service men followed the car of the president to the Parkland Memorial Hospital; some were with the vice president, some left for the airport, others stayed along the parkway around the hospital . . . only a few remained on the spot to guard the retreat and then left for the airport. Their duty was to protect the president, not to maintain order.

Some have criticized this attitude, stating that the Secret Service should have split and tried to catch the killer.

THERE WERE very few policemen from the Dallas police force on the spot as this was the end of the itinerary and there was no crowd. Elm Street is only an access to the parkway and there is thus no need for great police protection. All but one of the agents were on motor-cycles and they were first to reach the presidential car. They then rushed toward the building while several others tried to calm the people.

There was chaos. Some detectives ran towards the bridge as they thought the shooting came from there. By the time they had reached the building and returned to the scene there was nothing but bewildered newspapermen and spectators.

THE PRESIDENTIAL car, the wonderful blue Lincoln-Continental, stood deserted alongside an ambulance. On the bonnet was the hat which Kennedy never wore but always took with him to wave to the crowds. The blood-soaked carpet was strewn with the yellow roses presented to Mrs Connally and Jacqueline's bouquet of red ones.

Most of the remaining police along the route had left their posts when the presidential car had passed by, either to eat or to return to headquarters for new assignments. They were informed of the events like everyone else, by rumours and radio. Some just stayed where they were, bewildered, talking. Some phoned headquarters, but no one had given them instructions what to do in such an event. The whole of Dallas was confused, the police more than anyone else.

CHAPTER NINE

‘Si Vivis, Ego Te Absolvo’

THE LOUDSPEAKER SUMMONS irked Dr Malcolm Perry, peacefully swallowing salmon croquettes in the canteen of the Parkland Municipal Hospital.

“STAT for Dr Tom Shires!”

STAT was the code-word for “disaster”. But there were on an average 273 urgent cases at the hospital daily, and Dr Shires, the resident head of surgery, was never called out for them in this way. Anyway, today he was absent. It was for Dr Perry, professor in surgery, and his assistant, to respond to the summons.

Unwillingly, he picked up a telephone and called the operator:

“Mary, you’re crazy. Can’t one even eat something in peace?”

“President Kennedy is dying. STAT. He has just been brought into Casualty.”

There were two Casualty rooms in the hospital, distinguished as Trauma Room 1 and Trauma Room 2. Kennedy had been taken to number 1, and Connally to number 2.

Dr Malcolm Perry went down one floor, to ground level, to that narrow room with grey tiled walls and cream ceiling.

In the middle – still on the same wheeled stretcher of aluminium, since it had been thought best not to take the risk of moving him on to an operating table – the President

of the United States lay on his back, dying. A huge lamp flooded his face with pale light.

Perry noticed a young woman in a pink dress, shrunk back against the wall. She stayed there perfectly still, saying nothing, her eyes fixed on Kennedy's face. There was blood on her dress, on the stretcher, and in great quantities on the floor. The pool went on growing. Mixed with the blood was brain tissue, and on a nearby table Perry noted a fragment of the President's brain almost an inch thick.

Dr Carrico had cut away the President's jacket, shirt and cotton vest.

"How big he is, the President. Much bigger than I'd have thought . . ." went through Perry's mind. He unbuttoned the rest of the plaid sports jacket, and threw it down near the pool of blood. Then he held out his hands to a young nurse, who put on the rubber gloves.

One thought obsessed him: *Here in front of me is the one man most important to the world's destiny . . . His life depends on me . . .* And mentally he went over all he had ever learned of the technique of resuscitation.

OUTSIDE, IN the ante-room, journalist Douglas Kiker, overcome by emotion, turned the corner so fast that he collided with a negro male nurse who was carrying a large dish of boiled potatoes. The negro staggered, the boiled potatoes showered down on the flagstones, and Kiker, the male nurse, and Secret Service men guarding Trauma Room 1 all hurried to pick them up.

Kiker was still on his knees when he saw the outline of the black silhouette of a soutane. It was the Reverend Oscar Huber, of the Society of Jesus, priest of Holy Trinity church. He was accompanied by Father Thompson, his assistant.

"No, no-one told me to come. But the hospital area is in

our parish. I was at the edge of the motorway with the children of my school . . . We saw all the confusion. So I took the children back to school, and then the television announced rumours of an assassination attempt. So I came . . ."

DR CHARLES James Carrico, a twenty-eight-year-old internee, who had qualified in 1962, had been the first to examine the President, at twelve-forty-three.

All the doctors on duty that tragic Friday made immediate and separate detailed reports of what they had done and their observations. It is on an examination of these reports, a historical document of inestimable value, that this account is based. The Federal police and the Secret Service did not take them over – one does not know why. Perhaps they were unaware of this medical practice. There are very strong reasons for uncertainty as to the number of bullets which actually wounded Kennedy; and upon their number depends the validity of the theory of a single assassin. Therefore these reports constitute the only authentic and irrefutable evidence.

So – according to Dr Carrico – when the patient entered Trauma Room 1 he was already dying; there were some efforts to breathe, and uncertain heartbeats could be detected by auscultation. The young doctor took immediate note of two external wounds. One was low down at the back of the neck. Part of the brain tissue had been expelled from the other, larger one; therefore the bullet must have entered at the front of the head.

The doctor inserted an endotracheal tube into the throat in order to facilitate artificial respiration. Examining the inside of the throat with a laryngoscope, he at once saw an appalling wound in the trachea, below the larynx. The tube was pushed beyond this laceration, and artificial respiration began. Air was forced into the President's lungs

by means of an electric air pump; later hand pumps were used, for greater speed.

At the same time, a lactate solution was injected intravenously in the patient's right leg. A nurse took a sample of the President's blood: ORh Negative.

It is usual in America to wear a bracelet or carry a card indicating one's blood-group. The President had neither. No-one had thought of asking him to take this vital precaution. However, a bottle of this type of blood was immediately obtained from the hospital blood-bank.

IT WAS at this moment that Dr Perry arrived. He realised at once that his task was an impossible one, that he was being asked to do miracles. His patient was no longer breathing. The chest was still, the back of the head half-shattered, and blood was pouring out over the stretcher and on to the floor. It is difficult to imagine the damage that can be done by a rifle bullet.

"Send out an urgent call for Doctors Clark, McClelland and Baxter," he cried to one of the three nurses present. He had not realised that Dr Baxter, another surgeon, was behind him; Dr Jones was also present.

Dr Carrico now remembered having read somewhere that Kennedy suffered from an adrenal deficiency, a malfunction of the kidneys. He suggested another injection, of liquid cortisone. Dr Jones made an incision in the patient's arm and inserted a second tube. Dr Curtis arrived meanwhile, and took charge of the intravenous injection in the leg.

In cases as serious as this, the medical staff of the hospital automatically go to the Casualty room, in accordance with a well-worked-out plan whose timing is calculated in tenths of a second. In those short eighteen minutes, fifteen doctors were thus to come to the President's side.

What was pumped into his veins was a *Ringer* lactate

solution, also called "white blood", which is injected while awaiting blood transfusion. The flask of O Negative blood arrived almost immediately after, and the change-over was made. No one will ever know who gave his blood to the President; the flask was labelled "universal donor" – anonymous.

When the nurse had the door opened to bring in the blood-bottle, a big, strong, broad-shouldered man tried to force his way into the room. But the Secret Service man on guard at the door knocked him down with a vicious upper-cut.

"I'm from the F.B.I." protested the newcomer, getting up on his knees and waving his warrant card. "I've got to telephone J. Edgar Hoover." But the Secret Service had paralysed the whole telephone network at Dallas; he had to wait ten minutes before he could get through.

THE THROAT wound was such that mixed blood and air were compressed inside the chest. Dr Perry decided to operate and called for a scalpel. He intended to perform a tracheotomy; that is, to open the throat below the wound and insert a tube into the respiratory tract so as to be able to pump out the blood and air in the lungs, which otherwise would smother the patient.

PERRY SAW nothing now but the appalling wound; and, beyond, deep in the shadows, the face of a woman, still as a statue, whose eyes were fixed upon him.

Kennedy had not been anaesthetised; that would have been superfluous – he no longer felt anything. Malcolm Perry had satisfied himself from the start that the first bullet had rendered the President unconscious. Kennedy never knew what had happened to him some seconds after twelve-thirty-one.

The front of the mobile stretcher had been winched up in order to place Kennedy in a slightly tilted position – so

that the blood might be helped to return to the heart. Now Dr McClelland, another surgeon, noted that air-bubbles were escaping from the patient's mouth . . . indicating a hole in the lung.

Dr Peters, assistant professor in urology, therefore inserted a tube in the upper part of the right lung, just under the shoulder; while Dr Charles Cremshaw, an interneer, did the same on the other side. A nasogastric tube was passed into the stomach.

DR WILLIAM KEMP CLARK, doyen of the neurosurgical department, and highest-ranking of those present at the hospital, was lecturing to his pupils at the time of the alarm. He was the last to arrive in Trauma Room 1 – five minutes after the rest.

He at once established that there was no longer a pulse. "Kennedy's pupils were widely dilated and fixed glassily on the light-bulb. The eyes were divergent, there was no reflex of the tendon – that is to say, the muscle at the bottom of the leg (called the Achilles heel). *Any medical student would know what that meant!*"

DR CLARK wanted to speak to Malcolm Perry, but the latter stopped him with a quick movement and with a look indicated Jacqueline, still flattened against the wall. Perry had guessed what Dr Clark was about to say.

Clark went over to Mrs Kennedy and said in a polite but authoritarian tone:

"Wouldn't you rather leave, Madam?"

But without moving her lips Jacqueline answered firmly: "No."

MEANWHILE, DR Jenkins, aided by Doctors Giesecke and Hunt, had set up an anaesthetic machine to pump pure oxygen into the patient's lungs.

Dr Clark began artificial respiration as a last resort, to try to resuscitate Kennedy, pressing the chest with both hands in regular rhythm. Then he asked for a "torpedo", meaning, in hospital slang, a machine for measuring the movement of the heart. They are shown on a screen, like radar, a luminous oscillating line representing the heart-beats. But the little green line remained appallingly as level as a calm, mid-summer sea.

Dr Clark stopped his work; and forgetting Jacqueline's presence exclaimed in despair:

"Mac, it's too late . . ." (Mac is a very familiar American expression, like calling someone "old man". Never, in normal circumstances, would Dr Clark have used it to a colleague).

It was twelve-fifty.

But Perry wouldn't listen. He began furiously to continue working on the chest. Sweat poured from his forehead, still he went on. At one point, he shouted:

"For God's sake, someone give me a stool."

Dr Giesecke brought one at once, and Perry continued his work.

Dr Clark had asked for a precise cardiogram. Dr Fouad A. Bashour, a Lebanese doing a term as associate professor in cardiology, was informed by telephone, and at once brought in an oscilloscope. He was accompanied by Dr Donald Seldin, doyen of interneer staff.

Dr Clark now examined the wounds. The one in the occiput, the back of the head, was very large; part of the skull had been shattered. He found a bullet on the stretcher, doubtless fallen from one of the wounds during the surgical treatment.

There was blood everywhere: more than 1,500 c.c., according to Clark's estimate. There was a small hole at the back of the middle of the neck, and the huge wound in the throat.

The doctors of Parkland Hospital are accustomed to the sight of gunshot wounds; the Texans are always shooting each other. There was no doubt in the opinions of Clark, Perry and the rest that one bullet entering from the front had caused the throat wound.

Dr Bashour had attached the electrodes of the oscillograph to Kennedy's wrists. Perry continued to give artificial respiration like one possessed. He was sweating heavily, the drops falling upon the red chest of the President. An attendant stood by with two wooden batons, used in such cases to pound the patient so that the shock may re-start the heart-beat.

The oscillograph remained still.

Dr William Kemp Clark put out a hand and stopped Malcolm Perry. It was one o'clock exactly by the IBM electric clock on the grey wall of the room.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was officially pronounced dead.

It was then that Mrs Kennedy said: "Call a priest."

Dr Jenkins cut off the flow of oxygen.

Kennedy was dressed only in his trousers and the support worn for his injured back. Dr Baxter went and got a clean sheet, and with the help of Dr Jenkins gently drew it over the President's body.

The floor was strewn with bottles, flasks, labels, cotton-wool, bandages and blood.

Dr Peters gathered up Kennedy's shoes, and put them on his clothes, piled on a little steel cupboard.

OUTSIDE, SITTING on a form, face in hands, in a state of great shock, was Lyndon Baines Johnson. He did not yet know that he had become the thirty-sixth president of the United States of America.

SUPPORTED BY two Secret Service men, who had come in at the same time as the Reverend Oscar L. Huber, Jacques-

Right, the flag-draped President's casket is carried by members of the United States Services on the beginning of its journey to Washington's St Matthew's Cathedral. Below, the procession leaves the Capitol



line Kennedy went towards the stretcher. The sheet did not cover the feet. Jacqueline kissed the toes of the right foot. Then she took three steps forward and stood at the right of her husband's head. The priest had lifted the linen in order to uncover and touch the face.

"Please accept my deepest sympathy, Madam," he said.

"Thank you, Father . . ."

The Reverend Huber had never before seen the President, except on television.

"Kennedy looked dead. But I was told that there might still be a faint heart-beat. I didn't want to ask questions in front of his wife. So I began the conditional rites." These rites are accorded by the Catholic Church when a person is unconscious, and incapable of receiving the full rite of absolution.

"*Si vivis* — If thou livest — John Fitzgerald Kennedy, *Ego te absolvo ab omnibus censuris et peccatis, in nomine Patris, et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*," said the Jesuit Father, extending his hands to make the sign of the cross on the President's forehead.

"Amen," murmured Jacqueline.

Then with his finger Father Huber traced another cross in holy oil:

"*Per istam sanctam unctionem indulgeat tibi Dominus quidquid deliquisti. Amen.*" Then, finally:

"*Ego, facultate mihi ab Apostolica Sede tributa, indulgentiam plenarium et remissionem omnium peccatorum tibi concedo, et benedicto te. In nomine Patris . . .*"

"Give him eternal rest, Oh Lord," the priest went on in English.

"And may perpetual light shine upon him," responded Jacqueline. Then she said:

"Thank you for your care of the President."

"I am persuaded," the priest said, "that the soul had not yet left the body. This last sacrament was valid . . ."

The new President, Lyndon Johnson, and his wife leave the Mass at St Matthew's Cathedral with bowed heads

Jacqueline was then left alone in Trauma Room 1. Now John belonged to her.

OUTSIDE, IN the ante-room, the feverish impatience of the journalists was getting out of hand. They swarmed round the priest.

"Yes, the President is dead, gentlemen . . ."

But the world was not yet to know it. The Secret Service still blocked the telephones.

The doctors were conferring in one of the nearby rooms. Who should sign the death certificate? It was decided that this should fall to Clark, since officially the cause of death was the destruction of the nervous system.

In Trauma Room 2, Governor Connally was saved by a team of five doctors. He was wounded in the chest, arm and thigh by the same bullet. He was declared out of immediate danger some minutes after one o'clock.

But the doctors of Parkland Hospital had not yet finished their labours. An hour and a half later, the body of a policeman was brought to them: Tippitt. He was declared DOA (Dead on Arrival).

Bill Greer, the presidential chauffeur, looked through the telephone book. He stopped at one page, rang a number.

"Oneal Funeral Home," replied a voice, that of the owner himself, Vernon B. Oneal, living at 3206 Oak Lawn, right opposite Father Huber's church.

"This is the Secret Service. Please select the best casket you have in stock and bring it here as fast as humanly possible. It is for the President of the United States."

Jacqueline was still alone with her husband. She bent to kiss first his cheek, then his hands. Round his neck she saw a medal of St Christopher. She would have liked to take it with her, but then she remembered . . .

John, to whom she had given a similar medal, had put it into the coffin of little Patrick. He had asked her to give

him another for their wedding anniversary, which had been a month after the infant's death.

This medal belonged to John. She could not put it into his coffin as a remembrance of her. He would want something specifically hers, something he had loved . . .

So she took off her wedding ring and put it on John's finger.

IT WAS one o'clock in the afternoon in Dallas.

In Washington, in their little blue and pink rooms at the White House, John-John and Caroline still slept like angels.

'Mummy, Why isn't there any Mickey Mouse on the Television?'

MARIE WILSON, SECRETARY to a New York lawyer, was monotonously typing a conveyance, in her office on the fifty-seventh floor of the Empire State Building. She had left the radio switched on, since it helped make her work a little less boring. Suddenly a Frank Sinatra song was broken off, and a newsflash was announced — a special bulletin, as they say in America.

"Oh dear," said Marie Wilson to herself impatiently, "they're going to tell us that the East Freeway is jammed, or that some Harlem school is in uproar . . . They do pile it on with their 'bulletins'." She was about to twist the knob when the word "Kennedy" stopped her.

"It is reported that President Kennedy has been shot at in Dallas," said the announcer. "Nothing serious. We will keep you informed."

It must, thought Marie Wilson, be some sort of bad joke. Perhaps one of the office-boys had set up a microphone on the main aerial of the sky-scraper, which feeds all the radios and television sets in the building. Or perhaps it was one of those diabolical stories made up by journalists short of "copy". Still, she snatched up the telephone; her reaction was that of hundreds of thousands, of millions of Americans. But the telephone lines were blocked.

It was one-forty-five, New York time.

It will not be known with any certainty for some years if

the blocking of telephone communication was due to the fact that the apparatus, lines and employees were overstrained — the whole U.S.A. was trying to call relations, friends, newspapers, radio and television stations, the police and the Pentagon — or if orders had come from high places. This could have been part of the plans for coping with a national emergency; to avoid panic; to reserve the lines for the use of the organs of national and civil defence, and to prevent their use by an hypothetical invader.

THE PENTAGON, that fortress on the edge of the demarcation line between Washington and the State of Virginia, had been directly informed by General Godfrey T. McHugh, the President's military *aide-de-camp*. He used an Army transmitter which was in his car, operating upon a special wave-length. Secret Plan "F" of the Wilson Code, "Incapacity of the Ruler", came into operation. (This was so named because President Wilson was for a long time before his death almost entirely unable to take decisions — in practice, and secretly, his wife, Edith, ruled in his place.)

In the trebly-barricaded corridors at the heart of the building, the Officers of the Day opened sealed envelopes giving emergency orders, while couriers warned the four Service chiefs: Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines.

Almost at once, the giant machines of the Strategic Air Command at Omaha took off, their atomic and hydrogen bombs ready armed. Planes out on patrol (there is at least one atom-bomber always in the air) were ordered to mid-Atlantic. The Navy sent out a "red" signal to submarines armed with Polaris.

While the radio continued to deny the very rumours it had helped to start — that Kennedy's condition was grave, and even that he was dead — the Pentagon underwent the most serious crisis of the post-war years; although there were few officers who really believed that the President could be

dead. To them, as to all Americans, such an idea seemed absurd.

At the Pentagon, where everything is planned for ahead in minutest detail, the idea of a plot had already been considered. The President might be kidnapped; false news broadcast by a group of revolutionaries; above all, there might be a Soviet, or at least a Cuban invasion.

The Dallas assassination attempt might be no more than a prelude to such an invasion. It could be just part of a plot by Southerners mad enough to try to seize power – rather like the conspirators of July 20th, 1944 in Germany, attacking Berlin in the belief that Stauffenberg had succeeded in eliminating Adolf Hitler.

The possibility of a Soviet invasion is certainly a remote one, but thanks to its “electronic brains” the Pentagon had already visualised that a surprise attack on the lines of Pearl Harbour could start with such an assassination attempt. The Soviets would launch a few rockets, announce that others were on the way, and at the same time present an insulting ultimatum.

A Washington without a president – and, it seemed, perhaps without an effective Vice-President either, since the most contradictory rumours were circulating about him – would have the greatest difficulty in facing up to the Soviet demands. There was also the chaos paralysing the capital...

The Americans have invented the most amazing things, but a mere heavy fall of snow can bring all activity to a halt. The confusion was such that it would most probably have been difficult if not impossible to carry out the plans prepared by the government against a national emergency.

The President is both Commander-in-Chief and sole arbiter of the retaliatory atomic forces. He alone has the right to order the unleashing of the system of nuclear annihilation which constitutes the sole means (at any rate for the American strategists) of deterring a Soviet aggression.

His successor, Johnson, was not for the moment in a position to take on those responsibilities. In the first place, he had not yet been sworn in. In addition, many high officers might well have refused to take orders from him; they would have insisted on hearing Kennedy’s voice, suspecting some ruse by the enemy. The “enemy”, after all, could have made up the whole story of an assassination, and be now trying to throw the various commanders into confusion – either by cutting them off from each other, or by leading them into the trap of provoking an isolated act of aggression which would justify massive Soviet reaction. (“Isolated” because in such circumstances the commanders are not in touch with each other, and do not know if the order for retaliation is general.)

Certainly, there are at the Pentagon very secret instructions transferring the presidential powers to the Chiefs of the General Staff in the event of a president’s sudden death. It is obviously impossible to know the details of such plans. But no one is sure that they are really effective.

The “hot” teleprinter line allowing direct communication between the Pentagon and the Kremlin remained unused on that day. Krushchev did not initiate any enquiries; he was probably as much taken by surprise as the rest of the world. And no-one thought of informing him personally of what had happened in Dallas. First of all because only Kennedy had the authority to make use of the teleprinter; secondly, because the men of the Pentagon feared that the very act of informing the Soviets might give them the idea of profiting from the situation and deciding upon an offensive.

Perhaps, then, the world can find one consolation among the misfortunes of that day: the belief that the Soviet Premier is sincere, at any rate for the moment, when he claims to want peace. For if Krushchev had desired the destruction of the United States, Fate had given him then

an unhoped-for opportunity. He could have had America at his mercy – or at least have made the attempt, like the Japanese at Pearl Harbour, by exploiting the appalling situation.

Between the time when the President's death became generally known, and that of his successor's arrival in Washington, the Kremlin could have turned the world upside down. It would not even have been necessary to have attacked the United States. They could have occupied Berlin, forced the Dardanelles, menaced Japan and taken Saigon.

All that in several hours?

American strategists are always saying that it could be done.

IN SPITE of the still silent telephone lines, the radio succeeded in getting together bits of news on what had happened at Dallas – incomplete, certainly, often contradictory and always much more optimistic than the reality. The great number of private transmitters – in Secret Service cars, taxis, police offices and the radio stations themselves – allowed messages sent “in clear” to be heard, and reports received from correspondents on the spot.

The first indication of the gravity of the situation was the news that Governor Connally had been taken to the hospital's operating theatre, while President Kennedy still remained in the Emergency room. This must mean that his condition was so serious that he could not be moved.

Work in offices stopped. People began to gather on the corners of 5th Avenue in New York, Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, on the Fisherman Wharf at San Francisco, in stations and airports, and in front of the windows of television shops. Teen-age possessors of transistor radios, normally held in horror, were surrounded. Some shops

shut their doors. Taxi-drivers went home. Harlem was in a hubbub, believing that the Dallas negroes had been massacred.

Thus began a paralysis of American life which was to go on for four days, and which caused a loss of over \$1,000,000,000 in national revenue.

There was a sharp fall on Wall Street, more than six million shares changing hands. The Dow Jones index, a sort of Stock Market barometer, fell by 21.16 points in half an hour. Such a fall had not been recorded since May 28th, 1962, when it was by 34.95 – causing fears of another such crash as in 1928. The Board of Governors of the New York Stock Exchange ordered a closure at 2.9 p.m., thus ending a situation which could have finished in a financial panic. Later, an enquiry revealed that in spite of plans for keeping share dealings steady some powerful interests had speculated on the fall. For them, the Dallas drama was nothing more than just another chance to get rich.

IN WASHINGTON, Gerry Behn, head of the White House special detail, was one of the first people to know for certain of Kennedy's death, informed by an agent in Dallas. He at once sent six men to the Capitol – the historic home of the Senate and House of Representatives. The “gorillas” burst into the offices of the Speaker of the House, John W. McCormack; the clerks thought they were being raided by gangsters. But McCormack had been warned by telephone.

The law of succession, amended in 1947, provides that in the event of the incapacity or death of both president and vice-president, it is the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as highest in the hierarchy of the electoral system, who automatically becomes President of the United States. (The Senate has no Speaker, the vice-president acting as one there).

A mechanised unit from the Washington garrison was ordered to speed to the Capitol.

With a presence of mind which would have been more useful in Dallas, the Secret Service men took routine precautions. They entered the National Cathedral School for Girls, and went into one of the classes. They ordered Luci Baines, Lyndon Johnson's younger daughter, to go with them. She was taken home, and the house put into a state of siege. In Austin, the capital of Texas, others went to the University, looking for Lynda, the headstrong elder daughter. She was with her boy-friend, Bernard Rosenbach, a young naval officer. And what if the young man had put up any resistance to this strange kidnapping?

"We'd have knocked him down with a punch on the jaw," one of the "gorillas" said later.

THE TWO small children were still sleeping on the second floor of the White House, their dreams undisturbed.

But in the Senate, there was near-pandemonium.

Wayne Morse, the rebel Senator, broke off a speech criticising Kennedy's foreign policy when a page brought him a message. He started, and went over to the chairman. Ted Kennedy, the new Senator for Massachusetts, and also the President's younger brother, was presiding over the debate.

Ted listened to him, went dreadfully pale, got up and left the room hurriedly – forgetting to bring the session to a formal close. Such a thing had never happened before in that grave assembly.

THE TELEVISION stations stopped their regular programmes, cut out the raucous advertising sessions, and tried to organise themselves to keep the public informed. Commentators, reporters and cameramen were even more overcome than the audiences.

"I operated my camera like a robot – my mind was elsewhere," explained one photographer, who was filming outside the hospital at Dallas.

The jovial presidential Press Secretary, Pierre Salinger, was of course ignorant of what had happened, being en route to Japan. In his absence, a harassed *aide* at last admitted to the press that Kennedy was dead.

Radio announcers sobbed as they read the brief communiqué. The lights went out on Broadway. Women went to light candles in the churches. Car drivers stopped their vehicles at the roadside. Manhattan, like so many other American towns, was enveloped in a mantle of mist and rain.

In Berlin, young girls threw flowers – red roses – on the "Wall of Shame".

In Rome, the President of the Republic did not hide his tears, but wept with his face in his hands.

In Moscow, even, Mrs Nikita Krushchev showed strong emotion.

"I have always wanted to know what people felt on the day Abraham Lincoln died," said a Kansas City student. "Now I know. It's dreadful to think that I am still living while he, Kennedy, is dead."

The people of Dallas hid themselves in their homes. The town had become a city of shame.

In Chicago, a man in front of the *Tribune* building, shouted, addressing himself to the South:

"We are a nation possessed, which amuses itself by periodically massacring its presidents."

The head of the Supreme Court of the United States declared publicly:

"It is the Southern fanatics and the extreme right-wing who are responsible for the murder of our President."

"He has written the last but finest chapter of *Profiles in Courage*," said Richard M. Nixon, the man so narrowly

beaten for the presidency, of his rival. *Profiles in Courage*, which brought Kennedy a Pulitzer Prize, was an anthology of the lives of great Senators.

Although world reaction was perhaps even more solemn than in the United States, life there stood still for four days, as if a barbarian invader had clutched hold of the nation – no theatres, no cinemas, no bars, no cafés.

People mourned Kennedy as he had been a Knight of the Round Table, clad in shining armour, the ideal of people of every land and clime. America is always complaining that she is misunderstood, and too much criticised abroad; but she should realise that in spite of everything it is of her that others dream, her they want to love.

The midinettes of Paris decided to pay homage to Kennedy by giving up their traditional fête on St Catherine's Day.

ROBERT KENNEDY, who so much loved his brother John, received the terrible news while lunching in the garden of his villa with his wife and the wife of the French Ambassador in Washington, Mme Herve Alphand. The shock must have been terrible. Still it is difficult to understand why he did not, in his capacity as Attorney General, at once fly to Dallas to take charge of the police investigations, and unravel any plot which might be afoot. Even his immediate – but recalcitrant – subordinate, J. Edgar Hoover, boss of the F.B.I., did not think it necessary to go there. Another of the thousand mysteries of that inexplicable day.

Rosemary Kennedy was watching television that afternoon, in the lounge of the St Colleta institution at Jefferson, Wisconsin, for retarded or mentally handicapped children; she had been there for twenty-one years. It was thus that she learned of the death of her big brother.

A labourer working in the grounds of the Kennedy estate

at Hyannis Port heard the news on a portable radio, and rushed into the house crying: "Kennedy's been shot! Kennedy's been shot!"

The President's mother, who at seventy-two had undergone so many family troubles, did not show surprise. She gave the impression of having known that yet another misfortune was on the way. She woke up old Mr Kennedy and told him the news. Someone turned on the television. Probably no one will ever know whether Kennedy Senior, so completely paralysed, really understood what had happened to this son, the head of the dynasty which he had founded.

When informed of the tragedy, Peter Lawford was in a show at Stateline, Nevada – the same cabaret in which some months later Frank Sinatra, Jnr, appeared at the time of his sensational kidnapping.

"God have pity on us all!" he exclaimed, and at once telephoned his wife, Eunice, the President's sister; then his friend Frank Sinatra, head of "The Clan" – a group of actors prominent in the film colony. Sinatra ordered general mourning in Hollywood.

John Kennedy's grandmother, Mrs Fitzgerald (wife of the famous politician and Mayor of Boston), was not informed; she is 96 years old. To this day, she does not know that her favourite grandson is dead.

The trial of Gene Thompson, the man accused of having procured his wife's murder, was adjourned *sine die*. The presiding judge explained that the jury might well be so emotionally disturbed by the assassination as not to be able to give an objective verdict.

In Shiokawa, Japan, Kohei Hanami wept on learning of the death of the man he had once tried to kill. He is the former commander of the cruiser which so nearly did so during the war, when his ship sliced Lieutenant Kennedy's patrol boat in two.

"The world has lost an irreplaceable man," said Hanami, now manager of a shoe factory.

Also in Japan, in Tokyo, Mme Inejiro Asanuma, wife of the Socialist leader who was publicly assassinated by a teen-age fanatic, declared:

"The life of a politician's wife is bitter and sad. I too saw my husband die in my arms on the way to hospital . . ."

But another widow was less sympathetic: Mme Ngo Dinh Nhu, whose husband had been brutally murdered in Saigon shortly before, on November 1st. In Los Angeles she had told me that she held John Kennedy responsible for his assassination, and that she believed God would revenge it.

Now she sent an ironical letter of condolence from Rome:

"I do not know you, but you must understand now what a wife feels when told that her husband has been brutally done to death. What has come to you is only one effect of the frightful injustice of which my husband was an innocent victim . . ."

Cruel words, and flagrantly lacking in tact; but later – much later – history, no sentimentalist, may perhaps say that Mme Nhu was not altogether wrong in linking the two events. Extremists who blamed Kennedy for Nhu's death might have had some hand in his.

When Kennedy's death was announced to the elementary school children in Dallas, and they were told to go home, the pupils all started to clap enthusiastically, and sang "Dixie", the anthem of the Southern rebels.

Princess Paola of Belgium heard the news with annoyance. She was dancing at the home of Count Bismarck, when it was thought best to stop the orchestra playing.

"Now they'll shut me up like a novice again, just as I was having some fun for the first time since Laurent's birth!" she said.

In Santa Barbara, California, lives the shadowy but very

middle-class head of the semi-secret John Birch Society; there, Kennedy and Warren were hanged in effigy.

The wife of Earl Cabell, Mayor of Dallas, who that same morning had presented Mrs Kennedy with her bouquet, received a death-threat by telephone. Her husband gave up his intention of going to Washington that evening after a warning that there was a bomb in the plane he was going to take.

James R. Hoffa, irremovable boss of the truck drivers' union, the man President Kennedy's brother had been trying for years to bring down, remarked with a smile:

"Now Bob Kennedy's nothing more than any other little no-account lawyer."

In Nashville, Tennessee, a speaker at a plenary session of the municipal council declared:

"Jack Kennedy died the death of a tyrant." He was warmly applauded.

In the New York suburb of Brooklyn, thirteen-year-old Johanna Malandrucca was alone with her sixteen-year-old sister Mary. After hearing so much talk on the television about rifles and gunfire, the two girls decided to play with their father's sporting guns, imprudently displayed on the walls. Mary aimed a carbine at her little sister. Johanna did the same, but pressed the trigger. Mary was killed on the spot.

In Columbus, Ohio, a young man who had made a disparaging remark about the dead President was stabbed to the heart by an outraged neighbour.

That day, in the United States, eight deaths took place – almost all ignored – following arguments caused by the President's death. Two old men had fatal heart attacks.

The twenty-six dancers of the Joffrey Negro Ballet were in Kiev. During the evening, some minutes after the second act had begun, came the news from Dallas. The American dancers abandoned the performance, and organised a

memorial service – in which Soviet officials took part – in the Russian Orthodox Church of St Vladimir.

In Berne, Switzerland, the new United States Ambassador, True W. Davies, was due to present his credentials next day to the President of the Swiss Confederation. But since an ambassador is the president's personal representative, the papers signed "Kennedy" no longer had any value; from the point of view of protocol, the Ambassador was nothing more than a foreign tourist. Finding his position somewhat ridiculous, Davies telegraphed desperately to the State Department for new credentials, but no one in Washington dared to bother Johnson with such a small matter . . .

There was no televised entertainment whatsoever. Nothing but discussions of what had happened, the rare intervals filled by concerts of sacred music. With common accord, the television companies had banned all advertising.

Still the Americans remained rooted before their screens; television, like the telephone, they realised, had grown into the very fabric of their lives. It was only the little ones – those of about the same age as "John-John" – who asked vainly:

"But, Mummy, why isn't there any Mickey Mouse on the television today like there usually is?"

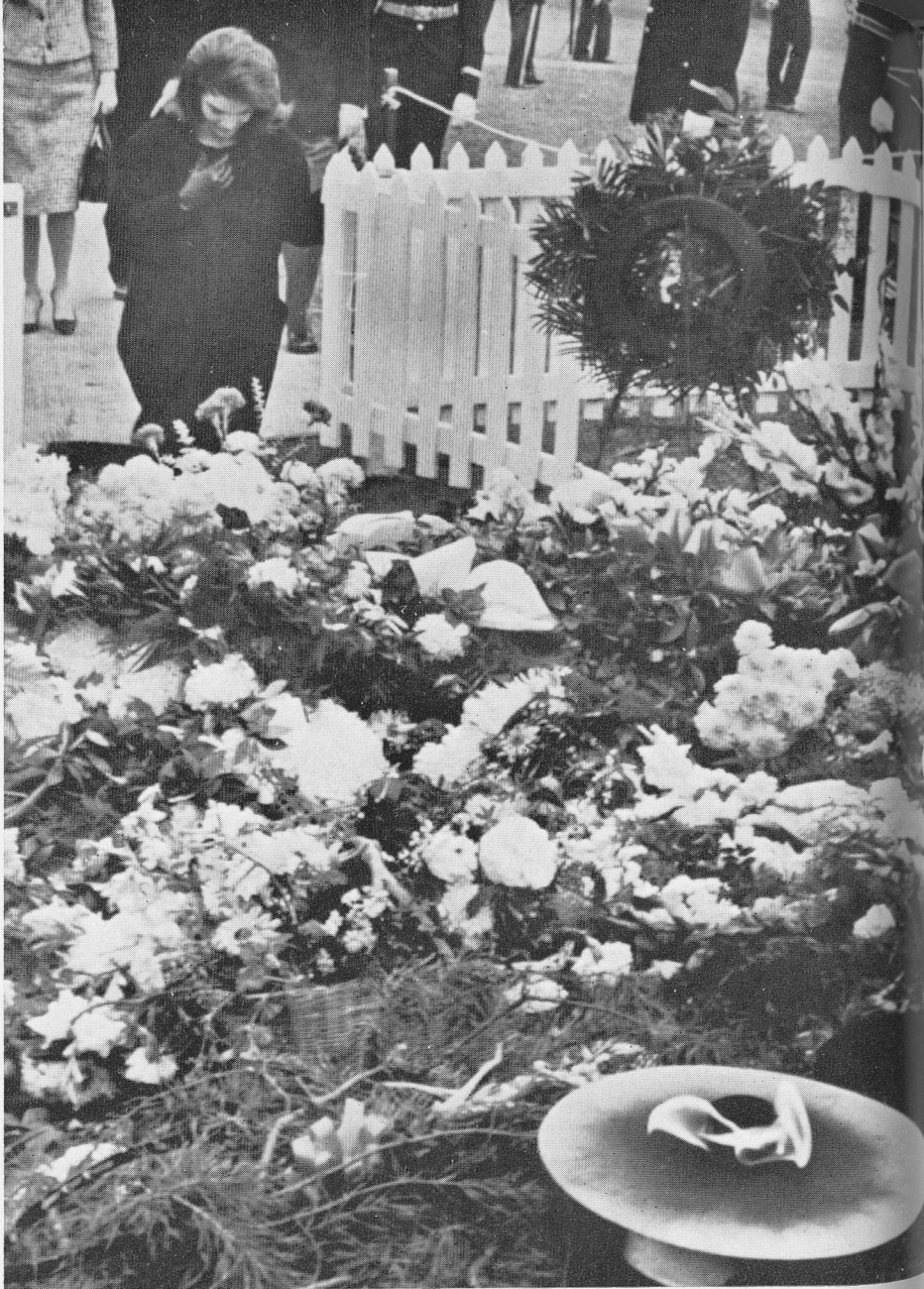
In the White House – which from outside seemed deserted, and whose walls looked grubby under the fine grey rain which had not ceased all day long – the two small children had at last woken up. They were not given time to ask questions; they must get dressed as quickly as possible, because they were going to be taken to their aunt's home.

The editors of *Parade* magazine tried desperately to call in all copies of the issue containing the article in which it was claimed that Jacqueline Kennedy was fed up with the White House.

In Hollywood, a decision was taken to stop the showing of



The Kennedy family attend the funeral of the late President. On Mrs Kennedy's right is Edward Kennedy, and on her left Attorney-General Robert. In front are Mrs Kennedy's children, Caroline and John



Mrs Kennedy at the graveside in Arlington National Cemetery.
The eternal flame she lighted is in the foreground

the film *PT 109*, inspired by the adventure in the Pacific; to postpone the premiere of *Seven Days In May*, of *Fail Safe* and of *Dr Strangelove*; and also to shelve without further ado all films dealing with the assassination of presidents. It was also decided to cut certain scenes; for example, where in the film *Take Her, She's Mine* a student imitates Kennedy's voice.

A book was called in from library circulation, a book which, however, had great success: *J.F.K.: The Man and The Myth*, by Victor Lasky. In it, the author sharply criticised the President; it was feared that mobs might stone the shop-fronts.

But at the same time plans were made in Hollywood for a dozen future films based on what had happened in Dallas; and already publishers were telephoning their authors to discuss books, albums, gramophone records, photo and portrait distributions. The idea was to put them on the market without losing a moment, to be first in the field. The advertising industry wanted to cover the walls with pictures and slogans honouring Kennedy; to write his name on the sky; strike medals; sell napkins stamped with his name; statuettes, lapel-buttons, dolls.

Capital cities, towns, villages, hamlets, already proposed to re-name their avenues, squares, airports, golf-courses, dog-tracks, nurseries and reform schools in his honour.

DESPITE THESE extremes, the whole world, that evening, seems to have found a common denominator in its affection for the widow in the bloodstained pink dress and the young leader so wickedly struck down.

Twelve people, however, did not share in this universal sorrow. These were twelve jurors, who had been deliberating since the morning on a criminal case before the Federal court in Manhattan. They had not been able to reach a verdict, and had decided to retire to their hotel rooms and

continue their deliberations next day. As the law compels, they were kept cut off from the outside world and not allowed to talk to their guards – still less to listen to the radio or read the newspapers.

These were perhaps the only people in the United States who went to bed that night of November 22nd, 1963 without knowing of Kennedy's death.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A Bad Tipper

R. S. TRULY, MANAGER of the Texas Book Depository, had watched the parade from the steps of the building. Now he was pushed down on to the road by the crowd – some hurrying towards the assassination spot, others trying to get away.

“I didn't know,” he says, “that the shots came from our building, but I saw a man run in there and go to the telephone, and then a policeman dash in. I thought he wanted to go up on the roof, to get a full view of the scene. I caught up with him and said ‘Come on, I'll show you the way.’

“We went through the ground-floor offices to get to the back and take the goods lift. The front lift only goes to the fourth floor. The two cages of the goods lift were at the top, which was odd, but at the time I didn't think about that. I supposed that everyone had gone to lunch, and would have brought the lifts down. I pointed towards the stairs. The policeman leapt up them two at a time; I could hardly keep up. When I did, on the first floor, he had drawn his revolver and was confronting Lee Harvey Oswald. The young man was in front of the door of a sort of employees' canteen. He had a bottle of Coca-Cola in his hand, which he must have got from one of the vending machines put there for the use of the staff.

“‘Does this man work here?’ the policeman asked me.

" 'Yes,' I answered. Then we went on up the stairs to the third floor, took the lift from there to the seventh and went out on the roof."

The police never thought of throwing a cordon round the suspected building; at the time, however, no one was quite sure that the shots had come from there.

Certainly, photographer Bob Jackson states that he saw a rifle fired from the window at the end of the fifth floor. But he did not get a photograph; he was still changing his film.

H. L. Brennan, a turner, tells of having seen "a thin young man, healthy-looking, with a rifle, press the trigger twice . . . He wasn't in any hurry, that guy."

A television cameraman, Mel Couch, states that he saw a rifle, but is not certain whether it was on the fourth or the fifth floor.

A photograph taken a few seconds later shows two negroes at the end of the fourth floor. But they are looking down at the road, not up at the window above them, where the shot came from.

Buddy Walthers, the policeman from the Sheriff's office, states for his part that the shots – or at least one shot – came from the balustrade of the motorway bridge. He ran towards it; that was when, with a Secret Service man, he found a rifle bullet in the grass near the bridge – the "fourth bullet"?

JACK RUBY, alias Rubinstein, went into the office of the show business editor of the *Dallas News* at 12.45. The newspaper's offices are five minutes' walk from the spot where the assassination took place. He seemed quite untroubled.

MARINA OSWALD had put the baby into its cot. The other little girl played nearby as she watched a women's programme on television. She still could not speak more than seven words of English, and did not understand the announcement which interrupted the programme.

Later, her friend Mrs Paine told her of the assassination.

"I was very much upset," said Marina, when she made her first free statement. "I was so sorry for Mrs Kennedy. What frightful person could have done such a thing? I would have imagined anything in the world except that it could be my husband."

While Truly and his policeman were on the roof of the Texas Book Depository, the Detective Captain of the Dallas City Police, Will Fritz, was directing a systematic search of the building. In the fifth-floor warehouse, one of the windows was found two-thirds open. On the floor near the window were three 6.5 mm. cartridges. Three cardboard boxes, one on top of the other, had probably served to steady the gun. Fragments of a chicken sandwich were also found.

Five minutes later the rifle was found, hidden under a pile of books. The cartridges were of the same calibre. The Texas police had difficulty in recognising the maker's trademark. First a German Mauser was mentioned, then a Japanese rifle; finally, it was stated that it was an Italian Carcano 91, coming from surplus stocks, and with a Japanese Canon telescopic sight.

Truly went down again to the ground floor and called together all the ninety-one employees. They were all there except one: Oswald.

"I don't know if it's of any importance," he said to a detective, "But I've one man missing. A guy named Lee Oswald."

"It could be very important indeed," answered the policeman. He reported to the Detective Captain, who telephoned a description of the missing man to the radio control room at police headquarters. "Twenty-one years old . . . About five feet ten in height . . . Weight, a hundred and sixty pounds. Name: Lee Oswald."

Fritz also sent two investigators to Irving, to see Mrs

Paine – hers being the only address for Oswald in Truly's staff records.

LEE HARVEY Oswald had quietly gone down to the office, where it seems that a telephonist said to him: "Someone's tried to kill the President, isn't it terrible?" – to which he did not reply. The telephonist does not swear to this incident.

He went out the front way, mixed unnoticed with the crowd, walked up the avenue, made a detour, went back again and knocked on the window of a bus which had come to a halt in the middle of the road because traffic was at a standstill.

The bus conductor, C. J. McWatters, says he is certain that this was at 12.40. He kept looking at his watch all the time, being late on schedule. "Oswald went and sat in the middle of the car. There were two other passengers."

The route of the bus was much the same as that of the presidential procession. Oswald would pass right by where Kennedy had been killed – like the murderer returning to the scene of his crime in a detective story. But for the moment the bus was still seven blocks away, to the west of the spot. It could only creep forward. At one point, a motorist who was just in front got out of his car, went to the front of the bus, tapped on the window and called out: "Kennedy's been killed." Oswald showed no reaction.

A woman in the bus, not wanting to lose her train, decided to get off. Oswald followed her.

"Give me a transfer," he said. A transfer is a ticket permitting the use of another line without extra payment. McWatters franked the ticket with his day's code-letter. It was from this that the police traced him when the ticket was found in Oswald's pocket.

William Wayne Whaley, a taxi-driver, was waiting in

front of the Greyhound Bus station – an intercontinental line – some two hundred yards or so north on Elm Street. There are not many taxis in Dallas, and the drivers prefer to wait for custom. Oswald opened the door and said to him: "I want to go to 500 North Beckley." He didn't live there, but the address was close to the house where he had his little furnished room in Oak Cliff.

The taxi-man was used to all sorts of passengers, and was not over-surprised by the man's silence. He got no answer to the question:

"What the devil's going on down there?" – meaning the spot where the tragedy had taken place.

Perhaps if Oswald had given him a 25 cent tip, he would have forgotten this fare. But on arrival, with 95 cents on the meter, Oswald gave him just one dollar, and got out without even saying thank-you. The driver was furious.

The housekeeper of the lodging-house remembers having seen Oswald go into his room at about one o'clock. He came out soon after changing his jacket.

At exactly one-fifteen, Mrs Helen Markham was waiting for a bus on the corner of East 10th Street, about a mile from Oswald's lodging. Some way up the road, she saw a white police patrol car stop: No. 10. A policeman got out: J. D. Tippitt. He was alone. No one will ever know why he went there, or whether or not he had received the "alert" message from the control room.

Mrs Markham had only an indistinct view of what happened. She "saw a man aged about thirty, with curly hair and a white jacket, go towards the policeman and speak to him. Then the policeman went nearer. They stopped. The man in white said something. He took a revolver from his pocket and shot the policeman. I thought he was going to kill me too," said Mrs Markham.

At the crossroads, Ted Callaway, second-hand car

dealer, was standing in front of his office. He had heard the shocking news about Kennedy on the radio.

"I heard a shot, screams, I crossed my used-car lot, and I saw this guy running down the other side of the road. He had a gun in his hand, and was waving his arms . . . I called out: 'Man, what goes on?' But he did not answer. I am sure that it was Oswald – I recognised him the same evening."

A couple of miles further on is the Texas Cinema. That day they were showing *War Is Hell*. There were only a few dozen people in the audience.

On the same side of the pavement as the cinema there is a big block of houses and shops, among them the Hardy shoe-shop. Salesman Johnny Brewer was looking out of the window when he saw a man in shirt-sleeves coming along. He was behaving oddly, going from doorway to doorway, as if trying to hide. (The police later found a beige jacket abandoned behind a petrol-pump not far away). Johnny Brewer went out and saw the suspicious character go towards the cinema. He asked the cashier, Julie Postel, if she had seen him. She said that she hadn't. The ticket-collector had not seen anything either. Brewer then asked the cashier to call the police.

There had already been two alarms in the district. Someone telephoned to say that a dangerous man was hiding in a church. Then a woman ran down the street like a mad thing. The police had sent out patrol-cars.

Policeman M. N. McDonald was first on the spot.

"I arrived at the cinema at half-past one. I asked for reinforcements. I had the lights put on, and the film was stopped. Brewer got on to the stage and pointed out to me a man sitting in the centre of the front stalls."

Other policemen, including the Sheriff's detective Buddy Walthers, arrived. The theatre was surrounded. The rest of the audience were asked to go up into the circle. Agent

McDonald came level with Oswald, and "seeing that he was reaching for his gun, I clutched him round the waist. We fell together on to the seats. I had my hand on the butt of his gun, but his finger was on the trigger. I heard a click. The hammer didn't work. That saved my life. The other policemen jumped on the man, and hammered his face with their fists."

Oswald is supposed to have said then:

"It's all over," but this is not quite certain.

At the sound of sirens, a crowd had gathered outside. Now they yelled threats to lynch the man. Oswald answered them calmly:

"I protest this brutality."

He was taken to the pleasant little police building near the Statler Hotel. He entered it just before two o'clock. He was never to leave it alive.

WARNED BY radio, the officers sent to Mrs Paine's address roughly arrested Marina. They asked her if her husband owned a rifle; she must have said "Yes" and shown them the hiding-place in the garage. But the rifle was not there.

She too was taken to headquarters, and submitted to endless interrogations. The police claim that she recognised the murder rifle as her husband's.

Thanks to a note found in Oswald's wallet, the little furnished room in Beckley Street was traced. The proprietor, Mrs Johnson, back from her restaurant, could not understand what the police wanted: there was no Oswald living here. Never heard of him.

Then a neighbour who had been watching television exclaimed:

"But that man they've arrested, it's Lee, our Lee."

The police rushed into the little room, and searched it for two hours. They found nothing.

FROM THE first moment, Oswald behaved with unbelievable arrogance towards his interrogators, taking the line that they were hired toughs. Gestapo dogs, madmen.

Assistant District Attorney William F. Alexander charged him with the murder of policeman Tippitt. At the time of the arrest there was no direct evidence of his involvement in the assassination, so the police contented themselves with holding him on this charge. It was not until later, in the evening, that he was taken before an examining magistrate for the second time, and charged with the murder of "one, John F. Kennedy". The law does not permit the victim's office or title to be mentioned.

When charged by Alexander, Oswald sneered:

"Tell that to my legal representative." He continued to ask for a lawyer, but did not specify who it should be. At one point, he cried:

"You treat me as if we were in Soviet Russia, and not in a free country."

Justice of the Peace David Johnston told Oswald that he had all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and need not answer questions put by the police.

"You treat me like a slave," Oswald shouted back. "I'm in a concentration camp here."

He refused to admit anything at all. He knew nothing of Kennedy, nothing of Connally. He had not been near the window on the fifth floor, had never seen the rifle before, hadn't the least idea what might have happened to policeman Tippitt. He had gone quietly off to the cinema, believing that all the Texas Book Depository employees had got the afternoon off. When not accusing the police of brutality, or calling them monsters or degenerates, he told them, "You're mad . . ."

But he admitted being a Marxist and a revolutionary.

THE TEXAS police have an iron reputation: when they get their hands on a suspect they know in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred just how to extract a confession. But police chief Jesse Curry realised that Oswald would not talk easily. He therefore decided to play for time, get together as much evidence as possible and then confront Oswald with it.

Malign Fate was to decide otherwise.

After Oswald's arrest, and when he had been photographed and finger-printed, a request was sent by teleprinter to the F.B.I. in Washington for an Identification. In the huge classification room at the headquarters of the Secretariat of Justice, on Pennsylvania Avenue, electronic brains gave the answer within seconds. Ten minutes later, the Dallas police had the information: Oswald had renounced his nationality and lived in Russia; he was considered to be a Communist agent, or at least a sympathiser.

A little after three o'clock, still Texas time, a brief communique was issued to the press:

"We are holding a suspect, a young man who has lived in the Soviets . . ."

Until then, the American man in the street, politicians, journalists, television commentators, had supposed that the only possible assassins must be extremists opposed to Kennedy's policy of racial equality. Perhaps acting alone, perhaps a group of fanatics, perhaps men in the pay of such Southern organisations as the Klu-Klux-Klan, the "Citizens' Councils".

Had not Earl Warren just declared: "Those responsible are bigots, ultra-nationalists, those who hate the negroes and oppose progress."? He was a man of highest standing in Washington, Chief Judge of the Supreme Court – and in the American hierarchy a Chief Justice is almost the President's equal.

BUT IF the word "Communist" did not convince the special correspondents of the foreign press (now on their way from New York to Dallas in a special plane kindly organised by the American Airlines only an hour after the news of the tragedy) it worked like magic upon the imagination of the American people. It paralysed their reasoning powers as surely as the rifle bullets had paralysed John Kennedy's nervous system.

The killer was a Communist? – Everything was explained, everything was justified, everything was beyond question. There was no point in enquiring further. As in all the best scripts, the Communist agent was the assassin.

Since the afternoon the people of Dallas had deserted the streets; they seemed very much less afflicted by the death of the President than by the shame which had fallen upon their town. Now they breathed freely for the first time this Friday. So the killer was a foreign agent ... He had probably chosen Dallas as the scene of his crime so as to bring down shame on this centre of anti-Communism. The men of Dallas, tall as giraffes, who love to parade in their umbrella-like hats, said to each other in their incomprehensible English:

"Oswald is 'it' ... It's him ... There aren't any Communists in Dallas ... If Oswald is a Communist he must be the criminal, because only a Communist could have done such a thing."

Councillor Davies declared to a journalist:

"It's a good thing that they've arrested an outsider, a stranger ... Otherwise blood would have flowed tonight in the South ... The Yankees would have decimated us ..."

As for the police – we want to be fair; the Dallas police cannot be held entirely responsible for the errors of that evening. The Secret Service were working with them, encouraging them in their attitude, and probably insisting even more than they did upon Oswald's guilt – the fact that

he was a Red was decisive evidence. They didn't need any more proof.

So something extremely strange happened, something unique in the annals of police work. They stopped their investigations. No more searches were made. No roads were barred. No stations were raided. No nets were thrown out. No one thought of checking on the identities of people staying in the hotels.

A Pan-American plane due to leave Love Field airport at Dallas for Germany by way of Frankfurt was able to take off without let or hindrance. No officer asked to see the passenger list; there was not even a Customs' inspection.

Foreign journalists who had come to the town had expressed a fear that they would not be permitted to leave freely, but would be stuck in Dallas indefinitely. Many had preferred to stay in Washington.

But after 5 o'clock in the evening, Dallas was a free city. You could have camped on the cross-roads in front of The Book Depository all night long, without fear of being disturbed. The doors of the building were wide open. It is true that you had to walk upstairs, because the lifts were not working; but you could freely open and close any of the windows on this henceforth-historic fifth floor, amuse yourself with the cardboard boxes and juggle with the books.

Now and then, indeed, you did meet a policeman or two. But they didn't question you. It was they, rather, who wanted to talk; they poured out what they had heard, and insisted that Dallas is the pleasantest town in the world, and that it was all the fault of the Cubans. They wanted to be photographed, and to have their names noted down – they wanted to be "in the papers" too.

It is kindest to suppose that the Dallas police, like the Secret Service, were only delighted that they could present America with a guilty party just one hour and some minutes after the assassination. The Secret Service had lost

its first president; the City Police had proved unable to protect the illustrious visitor. But bad things *do* happen . . . and now they had proved their brilliance, their efficiency, their infallibility. They had tracked down their man in one hour . . .

The word "Communist", moreover, seemed to them like a justification. As a detective squad chief told me: "We can defend ourselves against the ordinary criminal, or against a malefactor who 'plays the game' . . . but the Communists – they belong to another planet. Theirs is a formidable conspiracy, the most gigantic menace . . ." – Rather like the Japanese Generals in 1945, telling the Emperor that their honour was untarnished because there was no possible defence against an atomic bomb.

WE OUGHT not to forget that in some other countries the security forces would have reacted much more violently and blindly to such a situation. A suspect would probably have been shot down on sight. Troops would have occupied the town. A curfew would have been declared. Not just one Communist sympathiser, but thousands of people not in good odour with the authorities would have been arrested.

The real reproach, the sole justified reproach, that can be made against the Dallas officials is for their inactivity after Oswald's capture. If indeed they believed him to be a Communist, then logically they should have reasoned that a Communist never acts on his own, or without orders. A search should have been made for his accomplices. Some attempt should have been made to get to the bottom of the conspiracy . . .

Oswald, the killer, had gone to the cinema, perhaps to lay a false scent . . . but could there not have been a fellow-conspirator who took the plane from Dallas to Frankfurt, whence it is so easy to reach Berlin? Mexico closed its frontiers with the United States hardly an hour after the

President's death; but Texas' own inner frontiers remained wide open.

Just anybody could get into the police headquarters.

It was a circus, really a circus. Photographers stood on the desks. A journalist was sitting in the chief's chair, taking notes. Cards were being played in the lift. The television cameras were there; hundreds of cables littered the floor. There were reflectors, giant mirrors. Yes, it was like being in a Hollywood studio.

People were shouting, changing the ceiling lights, telling stories of what happened that time in Tokyo or Rio – for here were journalists from the four corners of the earth. Since most of them were staying at the hotel opposite, the Statler-Hilton, they were in the habit of calling in at police headquarters, by way of taking the air, each time they left or went back to the hotel.

District Attorney Henry Wade presided over this fun-fair, holding a non-stop press conference. Since each reporter, each radio and television station, wanted its own exclusive statement, he had to repeat the same thing again and again. A president had been assassinated in his town; he had the guilty person on the floor above his office – and he passed his time, almost all his time, in chit-chat. Oh Publicity, what is not done in your name?

"Sure, Oswald's guilty. I'm going to send him to the electric chair. The case is an open and shut one," he said – not once, but a dozen times. "No, there was no plot, no foreign responsibility. It was an independent act . . ."

How could he claim to know all that?

Oswald was obstinately refusing to talk; he covered his ears when Kennedy's name was mentioned. So he could not have denied the existence of a conspiracy. And on that day, no investigation at all was made into the possibility of fellow-conspirators. Like Joan of Arc, Wade must have been hearing voices . . .

The formidable press invasion following announcement of the arrest was justified; their curiosity still more so. But not the fun-fair atmosphere. A president had been murdered. These were historic hours. The future of the whole world was in the balance – things should have been done in a more seemly way.

OSWALD MADE two appearances before the journalists that evening. The rest of the time, as if at a show, the press was kept quiet by showing them the rifle, the police dossier and so on; and Oswald's wife Marina, his mother, his brother and the witnesses were paraded before them.

Oswald was very much at his ease, although his face still bore traces of the scuffle at the time of his arrest. He exchanged pleasantries with the pressmen, showed his handcuffs, shook his hands pettishly, as if to dislodge the detective holding him by the arm.

"I did not kill Tippitt," he said, in much the same tone as someone who says "I haven't had any tea this afternoon."

Then someone asked him:

"Why did you shoot Kennedy?"

"Kennedy? No one has said that I was mixed up in that. It's ridiculous." Then, rather insolently: "I'm being ill-treated here. Give me a lawyer, and in two days I'll be out of here . . ."

He could not know in just what way his prophecy would come true.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Anatomy of the Accused

THE EVIDENCE AGAINST Lee Harvey Oswald was entirely circumstantial, but damning.

He worked in the building, he was seen there, and he had no alibi. His palm-prints (not to be confused with fingerprints) were on the carbine. His own rifle, according to his wife, was not in its hiding-place in Mrs Paine's garage. A paraffin test showed that Oswald had traces of powder on his hands. A photograph was found, showing Oswald holding the murder rifle. Near where policeman Tippitt was murdered, cartridges were found in the street; they were of the same calibre as the pistol which Oswald was alleged to have had in his pocket at the time of his arrest. The carbine found among the books on the fifth floor of the Texas Book Depository was shown by the F.B.I. to be, without the shadow of a doubt, the one used to kill the President. Later, the F.B.I. was authorised by President Johnson to make an independent and full investigation – until then, the local police and the Secret Service had looked very much askance at any interference by the Federal police; they found bits of tissue from Oswald's shirt on the butt of the weapon.

S. Klein & Co., arms dealers specialising in the sale of rifles, sub machine-guns and revolvers from Army surplus stores, informed the F.B.I. that they had sent the assassination weapon to a certain A. Hidell. It was, to be precise, a

Mannlicher-Carcano carbine, 3 ft 11 ins long, and weighing 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.

This type of weapon had been used for a time in the training of N.A.T.O. forces. Then it was discontinued, and later sold at give-away prices. Klein & Co. had advertised it in sporting and "girlie" magazines, at the low price of \$12.78 post free. The so-called Hidell ordered one on March 20th, 1963, to be sent to his address – poste restante, Dallas. At his request, holes were made in it for the insertion of a Japanese telescopic sight, with quadruple magnification, which cost \$7 more.

The Dallas police found on Oswald a notebook, in which were written the name A. Hidell and the postal box number to which the rifle was sent. In the end, the F.B.I. found in Chicago the original handwritten letter ordering the weapon. According to the experts of this police organisation, the letter was written by Oswald.

Immediately after the details of the gun were published, almost world-wide doubt was expressed about its potential. In Italy, a Milan newspaper stated that it was impossible for such a weapon to fire three times in a few seconds; it needed much longer for re-loading. Innumerable experiments were made; journalists, policemen, Olympic champion marksmen, and expert armourers expressed divergent opinions. Possible, probably, difficult, out of the question...

But the F.B.I.'s opinion being the only one which counted, they reported to Chief Justice Earl Warren's special Commission:

"Oswald was an expert marksman. He had had special training in the Marines. It has been proved that it is possible to shoot at the intervals indicated by the film of the assassination. From the distance at which Oswald was, it would only be necessary to have a telescopic lens with double magnification to be able to hit the target easily."

A Dallas detective put it more picturesquely:

"Oswald was like a hunter lying in wait in the bushes for the deer to cross the path..."

The ease with which he could obtain this weapon caused a shock of indignation through all America, and horrified the rest of the world. The fact is that this is a very flourishing trade, and that anybody at all can buy deadly weapons very cheaply, just by going to the right kind of shop, or at a pawn shop. Specialised publications abound with advertisements offering bazookas, anti-tank grenades, all sorts of rifles, revolvers, daggers and even mines – a traffic with a turnover of more than \$2,000,000 a year.

In Dallas itself, there are in some shop-windows machine-guns "which once belonged to Hitler's personal guard", and "revolvers from the collection of King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia".

Only one State in the Union bans this trade: South Carolina. Only one demands the weapon's registration: Hawaii. Only one imposes a licence to carry arms: New York. Everywhere else, you are free to buy yourself an arsenal. The only restrictions are on how you transport it: in general, it is forbidden to carry a concealed weapon in a public place.

The Senate is even now diligently searching for a means of putting an end to this dangerous situation. But oddly enough it is the conservative elements, the ultra-nationalists and men of the South who oppose it:

"We need arms to defend ourselves against Communist invasion"... "If we weren't armed, the Yankees of the North would invade us"... "The Constitution guarantees us the right to have a weapon." Those who urge prohibitive measures are accused of being enemies of the Homeland.

It may be that in and around Texas, the right to possess a revolver is considered as a male attribute, reminiscent of Wild West days. Within a few weeks after the assassination, S. Klein, of Chicago, who sold the type of carbine used to

kill Kennedy, were completely sold out. Everyone wanted to buy this same Mannlicher-Carcano . . .

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS, and reconstructions of the crime have not taken into account one decisive factor: chance.

Detectives covered with medals, practised in the use of their guns, may fire at a criminal – and he may still get away quite unscathed. Hunters with high-priced weapons may miss a big stag at a ridiculous distance. There are infinite possibilities for miscalculation: the turning of a car, an atmospheric reflection, blinding by the sun, a bad-quality bullet – and Army surplus stocks often contain very old, defective and uncertain ammunition.

In addition, Oswald had suffered from nervous conditions since the age of thirteen. He had not killed before. He had never fired from that window. How did he during those unforgettable seconds, remain so entirely in control of his fingers?

He was shooting at a moving car, in which there were five people, and yet he hit only the two chosen victims – and hit them in vital parts.

It would seem that that afternoon he had a most powerful ally: Fate itself.

“THERE IS no doubt at all,” proclaimed District Attorney Henry Wade, speaking of Oswald’s guilt.

“So far as it is humanly possible to assure ourselves of it, he is guilty,” repeated police chief Jesse Curry. “The investigation is closed.”

Those who, like myself, saw Oswald close up, and talked to him, on that night of November 22nd, could only record such final statements. We could only note, too, that Oswald did indeed look like a maniac assassin.

He seemed to enjoy his triumph, and the attention of

which he was the centre. A different man accused of so monstrous a crime would have behaved quite differently. He would have struggled, protested, shouted, wept – not taken it all almost as a joke.

It is quite evident that the explanation of Oswald’s criminal act lies in his character. All his life he had been disgruntled, a failure, a good-for-nothing. He was like a man possessed, who is betrayed by that very demon which has so exclusively ruled him. The chance had come to hurl defiance at society; to revenge himself upon it *en bloc* (since in shooting Kennedy he shot, as it were, millions and millions); to prove that he, the obscure, unimportant, eternally thrust-to-one-side Lee Harvey Oswald, could change the course of history. So he snatched it.

But was Oswald a Communist, or under Communist orders, that day? That question will never receive a satisfactory answer. It will continue to divide American opinion for years to come. It may be that the answer lies somewhere in the huge ultra-secret F.B.I. dossier – two volumes of 125 typed pages, and three volumes of photographs and documents. Washington has wisely delayed its full publication.

Oswald had gone to live in Russia, and had renounced his American nationality, but the Soviet authorities had never been keen on him. Why?

Why did the United States Embassy immediately give him his passport and pay the costs of his return?

All this seems very odd. Certainly, he claimed to be a Marxist, but he had also been through the school of the Marines, and whatever you say about that *corps d’elite*, you can’t say it turns out future Communists . . .

Anyway, the militants of the Red parties were not very proud of him. Not only did the American Communists disown him indignantly, but they hastened to publish certain letters – requests for propaganda leaflets – which he had written to them.

In Moscow an unprecedented step was taken: the Soviet Government passed over Oswald's dossier to the American Ambassador.

The American Committee for Fair Play to Cuba – more simply, the centre for Castro's propaganda in the United States – declared that Oswald was never a prominent member.

On the evening of November 22nd the Dallas police had quite wrongly announced that Oswald was one of the movement's leaders. He had done no more than ask the Committee for leaflets, which he distributed on his own account in the streets of New Orleans. He was indeed arrested by the police during one of these appearances on the street, and fined some dollars. The pro-Cuba Committee of course encouraged him, as they would have done anyone who gave them support – in their situation, they could not afford to do otherwise.

Oswald, then, was rejected by those he considered his own.

Even his wife – who on the evening of the assassination declared that Lee was not easy to get on with and that she, Marina, was the only person who loved him – forsook his memory, or at least seemed to do so.

Some weeks later, after a visit to the hairdresser for a new permanent wave and more flattering "make-up", she declared before the Commission of Enquiry that she now believed her husband to be an assassin. She even spoke of another crime: Oswald had told her of his attempt to kill the extreme right-wing General Walker, who had preached rebellion against Kennedy, and so on.

Many documents were found at Oswald's home, including photographs of army draft cards, lists of names, and letters from left-wing organisations. But nothing of all this suggests any active part in political conspiracies. On the other hand, it is reasonable to suppose that anyone in-

volved in a plot would be careful not to have compromising papers about.

Moscow, too – if it *had* been concerned in the matter – could of course cynically pretend that Oswald had not been wanted there. They could forge false dossiers and send them to Washington – or even order a Soviet citizen to make such statements about her husband as would best serve the ends of their tortuous policies.

The F.B.I. was later to study minutely a list of books borrowed from the New Orleans public library. Oswald's long stay in the capital of the State of Louisiana – from May to September 1963 – has never really been explained. What was Oswald doing there? Why did he stay on there, most of the time unemployed, and far from his family?

Oswald read *Portrait of a President*, a book on Kennedy – but with a preface describing the death of Abraham Lincoln, and an account of the assassination of Huey Long – Louisiana's little dictator; *Mao-Tse Tung: Portrait of a Revolutionary*; *The Berlin Wall*; and *What You Should Know about Communism*. All these books were violently anti-Communist.

He also read some detective stories; those written by Ian Fleming – the James Bond series. This was John Kennedy's favourite author.

Oswald himself had written a book. A young shorthand typist, Pauline V. Bates, of Fort Worth, states that Oswald dictated to her most of a manuscript on his life in the Soviet Union, which he meant to publish. The book was a bitter attack on the Russian *régime*. It said that living conditions there were terrible, and that fear was the common denominator among the people.

Oswald took the manuscript with him; he told Pauline Bates that he had become an American secret agent, and would soon be going to Russia on Washington's behalf.

Oswald's mother makes the same claim: her son worked

for the Central Intelligence Agency. But she saw her son very rarely, and even the few letters he wrote her from Russia said nothing much about what he thought and did. Oswald had no confidants.

Once or twice in Moscow, however, he agreed to talk to some American journalists: Aline Mosby and Priscilla Johnson. Women, "because women are more understanding . . ."

He had come to Russia because he had known only penury in the States. For him, Marx was just a refuge. "I've never been a Communist, I've never even known one," he claimed. He had saved up a long time to pay his fare to Russia. He had learned Russian all by himself with the help of an old grammar book.

But it was easy to divine his real motive. He had gone to Russia to better himself.

It's crazy to theorise, but one just can't help wondering what would have happened if he had stayed there much longer. Perhaps one day he would have taken a shot from a window at Nikita Krushchev . . .

In New Orleans, Oswald also frequented agents of the anti-Castro movement. One of the organisers of such a group in exile, Carlos Bringer, remembers that Oswald suggested joining their movement and infiltrating the ranks of Castro's supporters on their behalf. Later on, perhaps, Bringer would have discovered that the young man was playing a double game, and have reproached him bitterly.

OSWALD RARELY had more than a dollar or two in his pocket. His pregnant wife and their daughter would have to depend on the generosity of strangers. Yet suddenly he departed, at the end of September, for a mysterious destination.

With admirable good sense – when one recalls that at Dallas even the main motorway through the scene of the

crime was not blocked – the Mexican Federal Government ordered the complete closure of the common frontier, half an hour after the official announcement of Mr Kennedy's death.

In Mexico City, nothing was yet known of Oswald's arrest. It was not until next day that the Mexican Secret police (who have the double task of guarding the President of the Republic, and maintaining a political security check in the country) discovered that someone named Lee H. Oswald – holding Passport N.154679A issued by the American State Department – had passed the frontier at Laredo, Texas, on September 26th, 1963.

The "Frontera" Line, whose buses date from before the first world war, must provide the police with lists of those passengers who cross the frontier. One of these lists contained Oswald's name. An employee of the bus company, watching television after the Dallas tragedy, remembered him; Oswald had made rather a nuisance of himself, first asking to be shown a cheap hotel and then trying to get a reduction of the Federal tax on the ticket.

I have spoken with the employee, Lucio Lopez, who showed me his records. These reveal that Oswald told him he intended to go to Cuba, and asked if there were a clandestine route.

I WENT to Mexico from Dallas because I thought it should be very interesting to follow his tracks in that country. In the Mexican capital I discovered some remarkable facts.

It is known that Oswald stayed there from September 26th to October 3rd; and when a man has for months nursed and perfectly laid a diabolical plan, which has led to the most dramatic political assassination of the century, he does not go to Mexico just to breathe mountain air or hear the "mariachi".

Oswald, who was always short of money, did not go to Mexico without very strong reason. Had it been just a question of obtaining a visa for a return to the Soviet Union, he could have got this directly in Washington, by post, or by making another approach through a tourist agency. If it was the action of an unbalanced man, subject to crazy impulses, then why did he stay so long in this foreign town, in an unknown country whose language he could not speak, and where he knew no one?

There is a quite simple and logical answer. Oswald wanted to prepare his get-away. He hoped to get back into Mexico, taking advantage of lax protection of the frontier, and go on to Cuba. If he held a pre-dated visa, this would arouse no suspicion.

But I found out something else in Mexico: in the first place, that the Cuban Consulate has not told all the truth about the Oswald case, and is trying to cover his tracks.

Thanks to the valuable help of an old friend in the "secret police" (he was one of the bodyguards assigned to both Kennedy and Eisenhower when the two presidents visited Mexico) I found out that Oswald had had time to go to Havana. An underground liaison exists between Mexico and Cuba. It is only necessary to go by plane or bus to Merida, and from there more or less clandestine planes will fly you to Havana. Or one can even take a plane directly from Mexico City airport. The dates of departure and arrival co-incide with those of Oswald's stay.

For this, it is only necessary to hold a *laissez-passe* from the Cuban Consulate, recognised by the Mexican authorities. Since almost always these *laissez-passe* are in false names, the Mexican Immigration service have no means of knowing if Oswald made such a journey. The Cubans of course deny it, but no one in Mexico believes a word they say.

The other point established is even more striking.

I had talks with people high up in the Mexican Government, and with influential foreign diplomats well informed on the situation. I was told that Mexico believes Oswald to have been involved in a Cuban plot; that he was, indeed, acting for a group of Communist Cubans operating without Castro's approval or knowledge. This group may be under the influence of neo-Stalinists, and their motives in instigating such a crime are easily divined.

They may have wanted to create chaos, a chaos which, in the end – in view of the political situation in Latin America – could only profit the extremist agitators of the Left. Or they may have sought to strike a historic blow whose propaganda value would compensate for political pointlessness. We should not overlook the fact that we have to do here with revolutionaries, and that fanatics are rarely diplomats of the classical school.

So completely is Mexico convinced of this that the President no longer opposes military action by the United States against Cuba, as always in the past.

Moreover, the American State Department would have been fully informed of this plot. Why then did Washington remain silent – unless because it was not desired to inflame American public opinion? To reveal officially that Havana was even indirectly responsible would have led to such a reaction that the situation would have got completely out of control. There is more than one general at the Pentagon quite capable of duplicating – against Cuba – Ruby's action against Oswald.

The change of government in Washington also necessitated a pause for reflection and evaluation.

I FOLLOWED, then, step by step in Oswald's tracks. From the bus station he went to the little "Commercial" hotel – or rather inn – in a lane named Bernardo de Sahugan.

It has four floors, is built in glazed red brick, and is very difficult to find. It is an ideal hide-out. The inside is clean, even modern – but not the kind of place where you would expect to find an American. The customers are mostly Indian lorry-drivers, and – according to the police – smugglers and pickpockets.

The chambermaid, Matildra Guarnica Hernandez, showed me the fourth-floor room Oswald occupied – small, but comfortable, with its own shower-bath. Oswald paid 16 pesos a day for this room, No. 18: \$1.60 in American money. He had no suitcases, but a haversack. He washed his shirt himself and talked to no-one; in any case, he knew almost no Spanish.

He had no visitors, certainly no women visitors. Not that the hotel concerned itself about that; there was a second door which could have been used.

The night porter who received Oswald, Sebastian Perez Hernandez, told me that as he was an American he asked him to sign the register; and that he showed his passport. (Why in heaven's name did the State Department give this new passport to a man who had gone over to Russia, come back again and was under partial surveillance by the F.B.I.?)

Usually, said the porter, they do not bother to register everybody, but Oswald made no objection. The Mexican police wonder why; did he wish to record the fact of his presence in Mexico City in this way?

Oswald ate in a kind of bar alongside the hotel, called *La Esperanza*. It belongs to an observant widow, who remembers Oswald very well. For an American, he was very economical, even mean, asking the price of each dish in advance and never leaving a tip. And he was always in shirt-sleeves, a thing which in Mexico City at once betrays the "Yankee".

The widowed Senora Dolores Ramirez de Barrero says

that Oswald ate in her bar for only three days. He came at exactly one o'clock and left at one-thirty. His menu was the same: a beefsteak, and rice, costing altogether 4 pesos. In the evening, at ten, he came and had a coffee, at half a peso.

It is therefore possible that Oswald was away for two days.

I went back to the neighbouring hotel, and this time talked with the proprietor, who had not himself seen Oswald but was horrified at the idea that the assassin of a Catholic president should have lodged at his premises. He made some calculations, and told me that it was quite possible for Oswald to have been away from the town over the week-end without anyone noticing. The porter was on leave on Sunday, and the proprietor himself took his duty. He did not see Oswald at all. The chambermaid does not make the beds on a Sunday, and works very irregular hours on Saturday and Monday; after two months, she could not remember if a particular client was absent or not. Certainly, Oswald paid the full bill.

At the Cuban Consulate, which I approached on the pretext of applying for a visa, applicants are received in succession in a special room, and interviewed in private. I was not asked for my passport, but was told to fill up a form.

I then asked, as a journalist, to speak to the Ambassador, Joachim Hernandez Armas. He received me, in the presence of a Press attaché, Fernandez Roa. I asked him to talk to me about Oswald.

The Ambassador repeated the official story, as if by rote. Oswald had gone to the Consulate, in the Cajo Fernandez Marques, on the morning of September 27th, and asked for a transit visa to Russia. He talked to an employee, the Consul being "away travelling". He was told that in order to get a transit visa he must first have a Soviet visa. His

passport was not in any case valid for Cuba. Oswald showed impatience and disappointment.

I asked to see the dossier, and to talk to the secretary concerned.

"Senora Silva Duran is resting," the Ambassador replied. "She was so upset by the questioning of the Mexican police, that she had to go to the country for a rest. As for the dossier, the Federal political police have impounded it . . .

Fortunately, I had already gone into this, and I knew that the police had done no more than photograph this dossier, which as a diplomatic document they could not impound.

The Ambassador said then that he would enquire, and that I should come back later that afternoon to see the files, and also to photograph him. This I did. But only to be told that the Ambassador was out – he had left for Acapulco. There were no instructions for me, and no message.

The Iron Curtain had snapped down in my face.

I have reliable information that on the day following the assassination, the Mexican Federal police arrested Senora Silva Duran. The political police seem to have known of several meetings between her and Oswald. The dossiers were seized, but later returned.

Senora Duran was severely interrogated, and her home searched from top to bottom. The Mexican police accused her of being concerned in the conspiracy.

So secret was this interrogation that at first it was thought that Senora Duran had been kidnapped by anti-Castro extremists. The regular police took the matter up, and so became the unwitting means of letting the cat out of the bag. The Consulate then intervened and obtained the Senora's release.

Senor Roa, the Cuban Minister for Foreign Affairs, sent a very strong Note to Mexico. Its language, indeed, was so violent that the Mexican Government not only refused to

accept it, but at one point threatened to break off diplomatic relations. The Cubans backed down after the Mexicans had freed Senora Duran and returned the files. The Mexicans said that she had been arrested in error, as a Mexican citizen, because she had "never said that she had Cuban nationality."

Why, it is asked in diplomatic circles, did Cuba send such a protest? The incident was unimportant, and it would have been normal to accept the questioning of employees on such a matter as this. Why, above all, did Senora Duran immediately go back to Cuba (the Ambassador was not telling the truth when he said that she was in the country) if her part in the affair was only that of a mere secretary accepting an application for a visa?

The Soviet Consulate and Embassy are only a hundred yards or so from the Cuban ones. There Oswald was coldly received, like anyone else who enters a Soviet Embassy . . . it's always like that with the Russians. He was told that his application would be forwarded to Moscow, and that that would take time.

No-one in Mexico City doubts in the least the version given by the Soviet Government. It is perfectly normal for the Embassy to do this; they have no power to grant a visa without authorisation. Nor was Oswald important enough for a telegram to be sent – which in any case Soviet consuls do very rarely. On the contrary, in view of Oswald's past history, the fact that he was not resident in Mexico and other peculiarities, it was natural for the Consular officials to be circumspect. Mexican agents stationed in the street state that Oswald left the Soviet Embassy looking furious, and that he made scornful remarks about the Soviets to them.

But what is interesting here is that, as I have established, the Russian Consulate only takes applications on Fridays. On all other days the doors are closed, and no one, whoever

he is, can get in. September 27th was a Friday. It was natural, then, for Oswald to go to the Soviet Consulate, so near the Cuban one, on that Friday; and to learn then that the offices were closed the rest of the time. In that case, why did he stay in Mexico until October 3rd? If it was in order to return to the Soviet consulate, why did he not wait until the 4th, also a Friday?

On Thursday, October 3rd, Oswald went to the bus station at 2.30 p.m.; that day's bus was late starting. He bought a ticket for Laredo, Texas, via Rio Grande, for 75 pesos. (\$5.71). The 690-mile journey took nearly twenty hours. He arrived at the frontier at about eight in the morning on the following day.

HAD OSWALD, while in Mexico, been in contact with other conspirators, perhaps also with Right-wing groups? It should not be forgotten that the anti-Castro elements were rather embittered against Kennedy, whom they accused of having betrayed the exiles' revolutionary movement . . . No one knows. The capital of Mexico has five million inhabitants, a swarming world in which a scent is soon lost.

Oswald could have been acting for pro-China Cuban Communists who wished thus to damage either the United States or Krushchev.

Oswald had very bitter memories of Russia, but he retained a lively admiration for Castro, a man whose exuberance and rashness appealed to him. Castro had called Kennedy an idiot and a demagogue, and said that if "the rulers of America seek to eliminate the Cuban revolutionaries, they themselves in their turn will be in mortal danger."

I recall that some months before his death, in his cell in the prison of St Quentin in California, Caryll Chessman talked to me at length of his plan to "kill or kidnap Hitler",

and make a triumphal return to the United States – he, the dregs of society, gangster and public enemy No. 1.

Perhaps Oswald followed the same mad dream. To kill Kennedy, and then flee to Cuba or to Moscow, where surely – such would be his naïve reasoning – he would be looked upon as the greatest hero of our times.

'I could stay here for ever'

WHEN THE SECRET Service man pushed Lyndon Johnson roughly down on to the floor of the car, the Vice-President came close to fainting. He was nearly suffocated beneath Youngblood's heavy body, his living shield.

"What's happening?" he groaned. But Youngblood did not know what to answer.

Jacks, the chauffeur, had been trying vainly to contact agent Roy Kellerman by radio; the latter was out in front, sitting next to the driver in the presidential car. The only answer he got was "Follow us to the hospital." Later, Emory P. Roberts, head of the Special Detail, ordered Youngblood "Protect your man."

Johnson staggered as he got out of the car in front of the hospital. His pallor and silence, and his mechanical movements, sharply struck all who saw him. That is why the rumour ran through the whole country that Johnson had had a heart attack. In one cinema, the performance was interrupted for an announcement of the deaths of all three: Kennedy, Connally and Johnson.

Johnson was taken into a part of the hospital normally used for less serious operations: one large room and one small one, with fluorescent lighting. Johnson sat down on a stretcher, and inhaled oxygen through a special mask.

It will be very difficult for a historian to sift truth from legend when it comes to recording objectively just what Johnson did during the terrible hour he had to live through

between his arrival at the hospital and the moment he took the Oath as president.

It is said that he broke down and could not decide what to do and that he wished to go back to Washington at once without waiting for Jacqueline Kennedy. She, for her part, wanted to stay with her husband's body and take it back with her to the White House, in the plane *Air Force I*.

In Washington, they are just as good at re-writing History as in Moscow. Today Johnson is president of the United States, and may remain so for another four years yet. He has at his orders publicity agents who are the cleverest and best paid in the country. They are also the most unscrupulous. He has the power. He is surrounded by a crowd of journalists, most of whom do nothing else all the time but try to please the White House "boss", and meekly respect all the taboos.

There were not many witnesses of what exactly happened in those two rooms at the hospital. The shutters were closed, and the doors strictly guarded by armed men. We must therefore follow the official version.

When President Johnson was told of Kennedy's death, he feared armed conspiracy, even revolution. He therefore decided that in the country's best interests he must at all costs withdraw from the dangers of Dallas and return to the capital.

This romantic idea of a "conspiracy" seems reasonable enough at first sight. It might be asked, however, why this interpretation of the facts had to wait several weeks before becoming known; the revelation came from the White House. The details given out, and spread through the world at the time, were sheer bromide.

If there was any question of a conspiracy, why did the Dallas police behave as if the murder was the work of one man on his own? Why did the Secret Service not use their arms, call in the military, ask for the proclamation of

martial law in Dallas, or at least demand an escort of fighter jets to protect *Air Force I* on its way back to Washington with the new president and all his suite?

A man who believes himself threatened by conspiracy or rebellion, *coup d'état* or invasion, starts right away in his hospital room to give orders, contact the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and his ministers. He does not waste precious hours doing nothing, or risk being out of touch for another two hours on the flight between Dallas and Washington. He would think that plotters might have hidden a bomb in his plane, or prepared an aerial attack – since, after all, one is much more vulnerable in a plane than on the ground. He would think twice about going to Washington at all, since it might be in the hands of the “rebels” or “invaders”. And once in Washington he would not go to his own home, as Johnson did, but to a military strongpoint – or at least somewhere easily guarded.

The plane with Johnson aboard took off from Love Field, Dallas, at 2.47 p.m. Texas time. But by then, Oswald had been arrested, the Dallas police had declared themselves satisfied of his guilt, had rejected the conspiracy theory and had practically ceased further investigation. There was not a single road-block on the roads between hospital and airport. Love Field itself looked just the same as on any other day. Departures, even departures abroad, had not been interrupted.

Yet there is not the slightest allusion to this in the accounts of the matter inspired by the White House.

Johnson was informed of Oswald's capture. What was his reaction?

Here is a man who learns that his predecessor's assassin – who may perhaps have wanted to kill him too – has been caught. Why did he not give orders for a full investigation? Why did he not himself take charge of it?

Johnson telephoned Robert Kennedy for his advice.

Why did he not say to Bob: “The brother you loved so much has been wickedly murdered. Come at once to Dallas, you're the Attorney General, with all power to punish his killer.” Or: “Bob, order J. Edgar Hoover, your subordinate, the boss of the F.B.I., to come to Dallas at once. Tell him to bring his best investigators, squads, apparatus, forensic equipment – all that kind of thing – and let in some light on this matter.”

Maybe these questions now serve no purpose, but many people in America are asking them, in the bars and the subway, in their homes by the fireside – and in Embassy boudoirs.

THE GREAT American magazines have given us the official version in minutest detail:

At 12.38, when all hope for Kennedy seemed at an end, a little man one vaguely remembered having seen around the White House corridors was sitting in front of the door of the room in which Johnson was waiting. On his knees was the “football” – the Washington slang term for the briefcase which holds all the codes in which the presidential orders must be given to the atomic patrols and strike-force centres.

Roberts, head of the White House detail in Dallas (he had served twenty years in the corps), telephoned Colonel James Swindal, pilot of the presidential plane, and told him to get ready to take off without delay. The pilot at once ordered complete re-fuelling, the plane's tanks being almost empty – not much fuel would have been needed to get to Austin, which should have been the next stop.

Johnson asked for assistance. Four Congressmen from the Texas delegation therefore went into the room and stood round him as if to protect him.

At 1.13 p.m. the man guarding the door of Trauma Room 1 reported that Kennedy was dead.

Malcolm Kilduff then asked Johnson if he could confirm the sad news to the journalists.

"No, Mac," Johnson replied. "Better to wait a bit. I must get out of here first and get on the 'plane. For all we known there could be a world plot, and they might mean to kill me as they have Kennedy . . . We don't know." And Johnson went on to recall the assassination of President Lincoln.

IN WASHINGTON, at that moment, a Senate Committee of Enquiry was in process of throwing some light on the Robert Baker scandal. Baker, Senate majority Secretary to the Senate, had enjoyed the friendship of the vice-president and the witness Reynolds was at that time making revelations extremely embarrassing to Johnson. When the Chairman of the Committee learned that Kennedy was dead, and that the man indirectly involved by the witness was now President of the United States, he abruptly adjourned the sitting.

JOHNSON LEFT the hospital shortly before 1.30 p.m., and got down on the floor of the car in such a position that his head could not be seen from outside. In this crouched position he arrived at Love Field.

According to the Constitution, Johnson was not yet president; he must first take the Oath. Johnson wanted to do that in Washington, because he was in a hurry to leave – but what would happen if the plane should be held up by bad weather? America could not wait.

So Johnson telephoned Bob Kennedy, who was at the time with John McCone, head of the American Intelligence Service – the C.I.A.

"You must take the Oath immediately," said Bob. "We will telephone through the whole text. Any judge can administer it."

Johnson knew Sarah T. Hughes, a woman of sixty-seven, whom he had had appointed to the Federal Court.

"Yes, I'll be there in ten minutes." She arrived at the wheel of her little red Fiat sports car, with a Bible in her lap.

"We must wait for Mrs Kennedy," said Lyndon Johnson. "She is bringing her husband's coffin."

Someone commented that Mrs Kennedy's presence at the ceremony would in a way confirm the continuity of the régime; she would, so to speak, "legitimise" the new president.

At 2.18 p.m. Jacqueline Kennedy arrived. Three Secret Service men, and some soldiers, carried the coffin to the back of the plane – but still in the passenger cabin. Jacqueline sat down beside it.

When Johnson took the Oath, Army Captain Cecil Stoughton, official photographer at the White House, recorded the scene on a special 50 mm. camera. He took nine photos. Three journalists boarded the plane, as representing the world press.

Jacqueline was on Johnson's left, as the latter repeated the Constitutional formula after Judge Hughes. The woman judge was trembling; she did not use the Bible she had brought with her, but a small Catholic Missal, found in the plane near Kennedy's bed.

Johnson gently kissed Jacqueline on the cheek, then his wife. Then he said firmly: "Now let's take the plane back to Washington . . ."

Air Force I was airborne from Love Field at exactly 2.47 – within a few minutes, just three hours after its landing there.

The first act of the Dallas drama had thus lasted three hours. Three hours in which life in the United States had been turned upside down.

The flight took two hours thirteen minutes.

Telephone calls were made to Rose Kennedy, the mother of the murdered president, to offer condolences; to members of the Cabinet; and to officials summoned in haste to the White House. While Johnson conferred with his *aides*, those closest to Kennedy preferred to retire discreetly to the rear compartment. The new president seemed very much on edge, drank caffeine-free coffee and a good deal of water with whisky.

Jacqueline Kennedy did not go to the telephone to speak to her husband's mother. She sat quite still, like a Madonna near the coffin.

At her husband's request, Mrs Johnson took notes, on which would be based the later writing or re-writing of what took place during those hours of upheaval.

BY THE time the plane arrived at Washington's Andrews Military Airport, an impressive crowd had gathered. It had been arranged for the press to be there, so as to put an end to the persistent rumours of Johnson's death. Ministers, diplomats, senators, high officials, relations and friends were waiting, their faces betraying their extreme agitation. Many were weeping. Among them was Senator Herbert Humphrey, leader of the majority in the Senate – he had succeeded Johnson in that position. He had a handkerchief to his eyes, sobbing, and clinging to his wife.

Bob Kennedy was the first to board the plane. Holding Jacqueline by the hand, he led her gently to a black Cadillac ready waiting near the mobile platform down which the passengers came. But Jacqueline wanted to go in the ambulance which would take her husband's body to the Bethesda Naval Hospital, where the autopsy must take place. She spoke and moved as if hypnotised.

It was she who took the initial decisions about the funeral arrangements. From the hospital where she watched by her husband, she telephoned a request for a history book

giving details of the conduct of Lincoln's funeral. She gave orders that all the funeral ceremonies should be exactly modelled on this – even to the design of the catafalque in the White House.

She asked too that her husband's face should not be exposed, as is usual at State funerals, when the crowd passed the bier, either at the White House or the Capitol. This must certainly have been for religious reasons, the Catholic Church not approving this procedure. But the fact is that the President's face was so much disfigured that to have exposed it would have horrified the public. The world must not be left with such a last picture of Kennedy.

CAROLINE AND John were taken back to the White House at about seven o'clock by their maternal grandmother, Mrs Hugh D. Auchincloss. They still knew nothing, but they realised that something dreadful had happened. They asked questions no one dared answer.

JOHNSON, his wife and his colleagues had already arrived by helicopter.

Three secretaries had stripped John Kennedy's office of the personal mementos which decorated it: the coconut on which he had scratched the message asking for help when his ship had foundered in the Pacific; the metal calendar on which were engraved the dates of the Cuba crisis, which had so nearly unleashed a world war; photos of Jacqueline and the children. But Johnson did no more than pass through that room; that evening, he dared not sit in Kennedy's rocking-chair.

He visited the Situation Room, where General Staff officers gave him a summary of the military situation. Then he went to his own office, on the other side of the grounds, where he first wrote a letter, meant to be read later on, to Caroline and John. Then he telephoned ex-Presidents

Eisenhower and Truman. Hoover, being sick, was inaccessible.

At nine o'clock, he went home to his villa, *The Elms*, on the outskirts of Washington, and took a light meal. He passed the evening watching television – which kept up a non-stop coverage of the drama – and in conferring with his *aides*.

JACQUELINE STAYED near her husband's body.

There were only a few lights on in the White House, where the children were once more asleep.

The fine grey rain went on falling pitilessly.

AT MIDNIGHT on this fateful November 22nd, 1963, the cannon of Fort Meyer sounded the first salvo.

At the same moment, other canon echoed this last salute to their Commander-in-Chief: at all the American military establishments in the homeland and in its overseas territories, aboard warships on all the oceans, at bases throughout the world. This cannonade was to go on all next day at half-hour intervals.

THERE ARE historic days which do not come to an end when the clock-hands meet at "twelve". In this way, this November 22nd was to go on beyond its desolate midnight, through the weekend, until twilight on the Monday of those grandiose funeral ceremonies.

It was at four in the morning, on the Saturday, that Kennedy's body was brought back to the White House. It was taken straight to the East Room, Lincoln's room. Still Jacqueline watched stoically over the coffin. She waited until dawn, then for her children's awakening. It was she who told them of their father's death.

Caroline, knowing beyond her years, understood at once. For John, "a bad man has hurt Daddy . . ."

Only then did Jacqueline agree to take some rest. She put on the table beside her big empty bed two red roses which had been given to her by Dr Buckley, the White House physician. These two red roses came from the bouquet given to her on her arrival in Dallas. During the tragedy, the flowers slipped under the President's shirt. The doctor found them, bloodstained, when the dead man's clothes were given to him at the hospital.

Jacqueline also held the wedding-ring which she had put on Kennedy's finger, before leaving him the first time, in the grey Trauma Room 1 in the Dallas hospital. Kenny O'Donnell, one of the President's staff, who had been in the autopsy room at Bethesda, had removed the ring from Kennedy's finger and brought it back to Jacqueline.

I ONCE saw black-clad Greek peasant women at Chypre watch with regal impassivity the burial of their children, brutally massacred by the Turks. Jacqueline Kennedy, whose Spanish mantilla heightened the livid pallor of her face, reminded me of them next day.

It was on the Sunday, when, holding Caroline and John by the hand, she climbed the thirty-six marble steps leading to the magnificent rotunda of the Capitol.

Inside, she kissed the catafalque and knelt to pray.

After her, more than 250,000 people came to pay their respects, taking eighteen hours to pass. And thanks to television, the whole world paid homage to Kennedy then, despite the shock of the second drama unfolding in Dallas.

That morning, Kennedy's coffin had been taken to the Capitol on a gun-carriage. In accordance with a very old tradition, the cortège was led by a riderless horse. In the time of Genghis Khan and the Mongol hordes, the sacrificial horse must precede his master through "the great door of the sky", to serve him in the Beyond.

ON THIS same Sunday, all the Senators were present in the right wing of the Capitol when their colleague, Margaret Chase Smith (later to be the first woman to seek presidential nomination) laid a red rose on the desk which John Fitzgerald Kennedy had used so long as a Senator.

IT WILL be remembered that on the evening before his death, the President had pondered the splendour of the funeral of King Edward VII in May, 1910 . . .

"That couldn't happen today . . ." he had thought . . . But on the following Monday – with amazing speed and discipline – it was shown that he too could be paid quite as impressive a homage. The time has gone by indeed when the President of the United States is relegated to the end of a procession.

An Emperor, three sovereigns, five presidents, six hereditary princes, thirteen heads of government and innumerable ministers and high dignitaries – representing fifty-three countries – came from all over the world to take part in the solemn funeral Mass in St Matthew's Cathedral, and then walked in procession to the cemetery.

De Gaulle, the inaccessible, was there – though during his lifetime Kennedy had vainly hoped to see him in Washington. Mikoyan, the man of the Soviets, too, who had brought a message from Krushchev expressing deep feeling. Krushchev had wanted to come himself, but the Americans had dissuaded him because of the danger involved. It was in any case necessary to take unprecedented measures to protect all these Heads of State, who had faced the risk and discomfort of hurried journeys decided upon in a matter of hours. In Washington, it was feared that there might be an outburst of popular indignation against the Russians, and the Embassies of the Communist bloc were closely guarded. Persistent rumours circulated about an assassination attempt on General de Gaulle.

On every seat in the huge cathedral lay a small card with a photograph of the dead President, and the words: *May 29th, 1917 — November 22nd, 1963. Dear God, take care of your servant, John Fitzgerald Kennedy.* The dead man had said this that day when before all Washington he took the Oath as the new president.

Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, celebrated the funeral Mass. It was he who had married John and Jacqueline, ten years before. Luigi Vena, who sang the *Ave Maria*, had sung at the couple's wedding.

All the family were there except the patriarch, Joseph Kennedy, the head of the dynasty, whose paralysis prevented his being present; and the 96-year-old grandmother. Among them was the little cousin from Ireland, Mary Ann Ryan, a nurse, brought in a special plane from Shannon Airport.

It was a fine funeral, attended by kings and emperors, dictators and prime ministers; with kilted Scottish pipers, that Kennedy liked so much; with hundreds of thousands of people kneeling and weeping along the route.

Of it all, I was to retain only one clear picture: of little John, standing upright at the salute, as his father would have wished, as the coffin left the Cathedral. That very day he should have been celebrating his third birthday.

His father should have been doing what he loved to do: whispering in his ear, then laughing loudly, crying "Secret, secret!" And the little boy should have been opening the parcel to find out at last what Daddy had brought back for him from his visit to Dallas . . .

THERE ARE only two presidents buried at Arlington. It is a national cemetery, the resting-place of the Unknown Soldier, reserved for the heroes of the battle-field – and for all those who have borne arms in their country's service.

Jacqueline Kennedy chose this place unhesitatingly . . .

she remembered a day, in March, when her husband had taken a walk near the cemetery with a friend. Breathing in deeply the warm air of Spring, he had remarked:

"I could stay here for ever . . ."

It is there that his body will return to the earth, near to the grave of his son, Patrick, born some months before.

There were presidents and kings at the graveside, ambassadors and cardinals, generals and admirals; but there were, above all, the humble and nameless men come from great distances, men of the South equally with the men of the North, who wept as if they had lost a brother . . .

There was the marine stationed on guard, who let his rifle sink to the ground as he sobbed. There was the young woman who laid a huge bouquet of red roses – still more red roses – near the grave; when a journalist asked why she did so, she answered:

"Because I loved him . . ."

MRS KENNEDY has ordered a memorial to be designed by a great architect. Until it can be built, an eternal flame burns near the grave. But even while exceptional credits were being voted which would make it possible for Mrs Kennedy to reply personally to the hundreds of thousands of letters of sympathy from all over the world, a member of Congress demanded to know who was going to pay for this flame . . . Back already to the double-dealings of politics!

Fortunately, the bereaved family does not have to worry about such questions of expense. The Will revealed that the widow and orphans inherit more than \$10,000,000.

I do not know what the final wording of the epitaph on Kennedy's tomb will be. The most obvious choice would be the concluding phrases of his speech that day in Dallas, of which the text had been issued in advance, and which may be summarised thus:

"Our generation, by destiny rather than by choice, is the sentinel at the wall of Liberty. Let us be worthy of our power and of our responsibility. Let us use our strength with wisdom and prudence. We must realise, in our own time and for all time, the ideal of ancient wisdom: peace on earth and goodwill to all men."

ON THE night of the funeral, Jacqueline Kennedy went to Arlington Cemetery a second time, to pray, and to lay on the grave the two bloodstained red roses. Then she went back to the desert of her White House apartments. And there, for the first time, she wept. She wept for a very long time . . .

And John-John, just three years old that day, but now the man of the family, wandered about among the furniture as if he did not believe this story of a "bad man who has hurt Daddy so much . . ."

"But if Daddy has gone on this long journey," he said sadly, "I shan't have anybody to play with any more . . ."

The Devil's Advocate

PHOTOGRAPHER JACKSON WAS in the middle of changing his film when Kennedy was assassinated. But he was less unlucky when in the basement of the Dallas police headquarters Jack Ruby shot point-blank at Oswald, crying, "Take that –" Jackson got a startling photograph of that and was to receive the Pulitzer Prize for it.

There had been no real witness to the President's murder, but thanks to the marvel of the relay satellite the whole world was to see that second Dallas tragedy in minute vivid detail on their television screens. At the White House, even, Mrs Kennedy, her brother-in-law Bob, President Johnson and those with them were all witnesses of that amazing scene – since at the time the networks were supposed to be going to televise the ceremonies at the Capitol but made a last-minute change.

IT WAS 11.20 on Sunday morning, November 24th, Texas time, a little less than 47 hours after Kennedy's assassination. But in America one seemed to be still living through that fateful Friday, as if all the clocks had stopped then.

"I did not want Mrs Kennedy to have to go through a trial," Jack Ruby was to say in explanation of what he had done. Later, clever lawyers would stage a fascinating trial, pleading insanity and making the situation more involved than ever.

All America watched the dramatic lynching, the first in the history of television, with horror. All America realised that this third murder must modify completely all pre-conceived ideas on the matter.

IT IS correct that Jacqueline Kennedy, and President Johnson too, would in theory have had to appear at Oswald's eventual trial; though it is difficult to imagine Defence Counsel asking for their attendance, which would automatically have meant his client's conviction. But immediately after his arrest, Ruby gave a number of other, contradictory, explanations of his action – quite apart from those, suggested by his experienced lawyers, to be put forward at his trial.

He wanted to punish a Communist; he wanted to unmask the extremist right-wing organisations whose appeals to hatred had incited Oswald; he simply wanted to fight the wave of anti-semitism (swastikas had been drawn on the windows of his nightclub) by proving that a Jew is not to be put upon; to get publicity for himself as an avenging angel; to avenge himself for the fact that after the murder he had had to close up for a while; or even just that he had done it because "he felt an uncontrollable horror of the President's killer."

This last motive is plausible, and all Dallas – all the South – will always believe it, since during those days almost anyone in the United States would have done the same. But it is difficult to understand why Jack Ruby did not do it that very evening of the murder, when in fact he was close to Oswald – who was being shown to the press on the ground floor of police headquarters. The time and the opportunity were there.

Why did he wait two days? Especially since he belonged to the town, and had had time to think things over.

ON THIS Sunday morning, Ruby went to buy a sandwich, then sent off a \$25 money order by telegram to enable his girl-friend, Karen Lynn Bennett, a stripper at his club, to visit her sick mother. Then Ruby took his dog for a walk, went off to kill Oswald under the eyes of his chums, the police. He just happened to have a revolver on him . . .

Even for Dallas, it seems a bit odd.

And what has become of that famous report in the dossier of Martin Dies, ex-president of the well-documented and very powerful Congressional Commission on Anti-American Activities, stating that a certain Jack Ruby was a "killer" in the service of the American Communist Party – a report ten years old? However, it must be admitted that Ruby is not only a common name but that Jack Ruby's real name is Rubenstein.

The invisible scriptwriter of the Dallas drama so arranged things that the dying Oswald was taken at 11.32 Texas time to that same Parkland Hospital where vain attempts were made to resuscitate Kennedy, where Tippitt died, where Oswald himself was cared for at the age of seven, and where his daughter Rachel had just been born.

Oswald was taken to Trauma Room 2, and then (at 11.42, the doctors making superhuman efforts to save him) to the large operating theatre.

Doctors Malcolm Perry, McClelland, Jones, Jenkins, Akin, and Pollock were present; together with Dr Bashour, the Lebanese, with his cardiac apparatus. In addition, Dr Shires, the chief surgeon, was in charge of the team. (He had been absent during the treatment of Kennedy, but had driven more than six hundred miles at top speed in order to operate upon Governor Connally.)

Ruby's bullet had penetrated the lower left side of the abdomen, perforating the stomach, and had emerged near the right kidney. When Oswald was brought in, there was very little bleeding, and his pulse was 130. But when the

wound was opened in order to examine the path of the bullet, an internal haemorrhage was discovered. Several pints of blood were pumped out, and two transfusions given.

The medical report by the eighteen doctors concerned is very long and detailed. It suffices to say that Oswald never regained consciousness, that the pulse-rate fell rapidly to 40, 20, and then to nil. The doctors made every effort. They tried all possible methods, including injections and electric shock. Indeed, they did even more for Oswald than they had been able to do for President Kennedy.

In vain. At 12.55 Dr Bashour's oscillograph came to a standstill. At 1.07 Oswald was pronounced dead – 48 hours 6 minutes after Kennedy.

His wife and his mother were waiting outside.

In the operating theatre, two F.B.I. agents were standing by, in hope of catching a last word . . . perhaps a confession.

OSWALD WAS buried, in the presence of his family and of an imposing force of police – one hour after the funeral ceremony at the Arlington Cemetery in Washington – in the Rose Hill public burial-ground at Fort Worth; and at the expense of the State of Texas. At the last moment, the Reverend Louis Sanders, a Protestant, agreed to preside at this sombre service – other ministers had declined.

Marguerite Oswald, his mother, had refused to have him cremated, and refused even more strongly to bury him in a cemetery further away.

"My son is an American. He died innocent, as guaranteed by the Constitution, and he will be buried here."

The grave was just a sloping piece of ground with a small wooden cross and a slip of paper bearing the unhappy young man's name. There are always flowers on it, brought by Marina – red roses.

Threats of desecration have not been carried out. But there is always a policeman on duty near the grave.

This officer, Howard Tenty, put this odd question to me: "Tell me, sir, is what I'm doing here honourable? Should I be proud of it, or is it a shameful task, to be guarding the remains of a wretch?"

That may well evermore be the epitaph of Lee Harvey Oswald.

POLICEMAN J. D. TIPPITT was buried at almost the same time; but his funeral ceremony was a glorious one. For him there were flags, a band and a military salute, in the Laurel Land Park near to his home, south of Dallas. It was televised.

The future of his widow and children has been provided for. They have received more than \$600,000 in aid, and money is still coming in.

One wonders why so much money should have been sent for this unknown policeman, the exact reason for whose death remains a mystery. The policemen who died defending Truman were never the objects of so much solicitude. Does America want to soothe her conscience with dollars? More than \$40,000 has also been sent to Oswald's widow.

Mrs Tippitt behaved very well through it all. With great dignity she has tried to avoid publicity and insisted upon remaining obscure; so far she has not touched a cent of all that money.

This is more than can be said for the other people concerned. People allegedly representing Ruby, Marina Oswald and Oswald's mother, offer their "memoirs" for sale at unheard-of prices: \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000; and lend themselves to all sorts of publicity manoeuvres in order to push the price higher still. Only in America could killers or the relations of killers automatically become best-selling authors.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER the murder, Marina Oswald proclaimed that she had been a great admirer of Kennedy, that

she had never suspected even for a moment that her husband could be the murderer, and that he had never spoken to her of any such plan. In a brief sole interview with a foreign journalist, she declared Oswald's innocence.

Later, however, she began to make statements contradicting this, and even told how some months before Oswald had tried to shoot General Walker.

It is difficult to assess Marina Oswald: a foreigner; brought up in a totalitarian country considered an enemy by the United States; wife of a man accused of an odious crime and tragically dead and practically a prisoner of the governmental police. She seems, on the other hand, to have developed a taste for the luxury life offered her by the same police and shows every intention of staying in a city where she is surrounded by hatred, in a country whose language she does not know, and of wanting to bring up her children there, although in America their very name will always remain accursed.

Why has the Federal police maintained a "wall" around Marina? Why should anyone be afraid that she might speak freely? Why could not her own mother-in-law go to see her? Or Mrs Paine, who for so long gave her a roof and a place at her own table?

The mother, Marguerite Oswald, who lives in a small bungalow on the outskirts of Fort Worth, adamantly defends her son. "The Constitution says that a man is innocent until proved guilty," she insists. "My son always had to suffer because he was poor. That's why he went to Russia. If at the time of his arrest in Dallas he had had the means to pay a good lawyer, he would be alive today. Look at Ruby - he's rich. He has a defence counsel and his trial is a masquerade.

"I want my son's interests defended during the enquiry at Washington by Earl Warren's Commission. The police must not be both prosecution and judge."

Mrs Oswald is right. Doubt of Oswald's guilt persists in the American subconscious. If it is not dissipated, it will go far to poison the life of the Nation, creating divisions, being exploited by factions, undermining morale. This doubt has seriously damaged United States prestige abroad, and had the effect of a grave diplomatic defeat.

An attempt must be made to find out the truth; and if that truth coincides with the official version, to give irrefutable proof.

The fate of Marina Oswald, of his mother, or of Ruby, the vanity of policemen, the image of Dallas, do not really count. What matters is Democracy itself, and there can be no real Democracy without real Justice.

It is therefore necessary to present a posthumous defence of Oswald. A "Devil's Advocate" should have been present alongside James Lee Rankin, the liberal lawyer who conducted the final enquiry in the name of the Warren Commission.

But who would dare defend Oswald?

There is no shortage of lawyers, and even some independent American journals have dared to press the theme of doubt.

"Oswald's defence is a duty for all jurists," affirmed Professor Paul Freund, doyen of the Faculty of Law at Harvard University. "If Kennedy were still alive, he would be the one to insist upon such a defence. All violation of the spirit of 'fair play' is in fact an insult to Kennedy's memory."

Society cannot blot out a man's life without regard for its own rules, and without guaranteeing that his rights will be protected. Ruby's action was a crime; but equally criminal has been the attitude of the police, the American press and the authorities.

ADVOCATE PERCY Worman, president of the Association of Defence Lawyers in Texas, who was to defend Ruby for two short days, declared:

"Like everyone else, I believe Oswald guilty. But Justice cannot be based on opinions, instincts, press news, or on deduction. Justice must be based upon facts, on facts as presented in a Court of Law. Had I been able to defend Oswald, he would have escaped the death penalty. It would have been decided that he was not fully responsible. But in Dallas there was no trial, since the trial was held by the press and television. One could never have found in Dallas twelve impartial jurors – short of discovering some sick persons who had been cut off for a couple of months from the rest of the world."

Certainly, lawyer Worman recognised that the press and television were only doing their job. After all, presidents aren't assassinated every day of the week, and a lack of news might well have given rise to a state of panic throughout the country.

American jurists recognise that the gravity of a crime does not justify extraordinary measures by the police, or violation of the rights of the individual. Otherwise, one is back with dictatorship and "special tribunals". Hitler doomed his opponents "legally", arguing that the plot against his person was so serious as to justify the use of exceptional procedures. Stalin, too, during the "purges", and the condemnation of the Jewish doctors.

"In the conflict between the rights of the mass and those of the individual, the rights of the individual should always triumph," says Professor Freund. "The Supreme Court of the United States always maintains this fundamental principle. It would certainly have quashed any sentence by a Texas tribunal which clashed with these principles of the American Constitution."

ONE SHOULD perhaps detail here some aspects of American law.

In the first place, the importance of the victim has no bearing at all. Whether Oswald murdered a President of the United States or a tramp should make no difference. In practice, the charge against Oswald of killing policeman Tippitt would have been the one to be pressed, since Kennedy's murder would have been more difficult to prove.

Further, much of the evidence against Oswald could not have been presented in court. The Supreme Court (a kind of Court of Appeal) is very meticulous on this point: a piece of evidence must have been obtained legally. If the police have entered a house without a search warrant, they cannot make use of documents seized there. No statement by the accused can be put in unless he was first formally charged. No arrest can be made at random: there must in the first place be some grounds for suspicion, based upon evidence.

The Supreme Court has set free guilty persons, who had confessed to their crime, because there had been a flaw in their arrest. The Court's standpoint is clear: better one guilty person at liberty than tolerate the least violation of the rights of the individual.

Oswald resisted his arrest in the cinema but a good lawyer might have been able to have shown this was understandable self-defence. It would also have been shown that as a sick man Oswald was not fully responsible for his actions.

Dr Lewis Robbins, director of a clinic in New York, examined Oswald and diagnosed him as an advanced paranoiac – "a psychopath who deliberately leaves tracks because he wants to be punished, perhaps for a crime he did not commit." Let Percy Worman be our "Devil's Advocate". Here is his defence of Oswald:

(1) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald worked in the building from which the shots were fired.

Yes; but there were nearly a hundred other employees in it that day.

(2) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald was drinking on the second floor.

But that shows that no one suspected him, because the policeman took no notice of him; and that he did not try to get away. How could he in a few seconds have put down his rifle and run (without being seen) down to the second floor – the lifts remaining above?

(3) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald left the building.

That was not forbidden. A man with Oswald's past was bound to feel uneasy in a building taken over by police. No one told him to stay.

(4) Prosecution evidence: Oswald took a bus.

And why not? Didn't he take the bus to go home from work?

(5) Prosecution Evidence: He left the bus to take a taxi.

Others did, too. The bus being held up, it was sensible to take a taxi.

(6) Prosecution Evidence: He was seen by the housekeeper of the rooming-house at one o'clock.

What more natural than for a man to go home? But if the witnesses are telling the truth, both bus and taxi went very slowly; and if Oswald went part of the way on foot, how could he in ten minutes have made a journey which normally took twenty? The housekeeper could not have seen him come back at one o'clock. Her statement would certainly have been thrown out by a good lawyer.

(7) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald killed Tippitt.

It hasn't been conclusively proved that anyone saw him shoot Tippitt, or speak to him. Five months after the crime, although producing many other items of evidence, the police have never yet shown the revolver used to kill Tippitt, shown the finger-prints, or proved that the revolver belonged to Oswald – or even that Oswald had a revolver?

(8) Prosecution Evidence: Helen Markham saw Tippitt's murder.

But from a distance, and she has never identified Oswald. Anyway, Tippitt's murder does not prove the murder of Kennedy. Oswald might have had a dozen reasons for killing Tippitt: a quarrel, to get his own back, an act of madness, over some woman . . . There had been seventy murders in Dallas during the previous ten months.

(9) Prosecution Evidence: At the moment of his arrest, Oswald said: "It's all over."

This is not certain. Nor does it prove that he was referring to Kennedy, or to a crime.

(10) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald's finger-prints were found on the window-sill at the Texas Book Depository, and on some boxes.

Why not? He worked on that floor, all the time touching the boxes and opening and shutting the windows. There were also hundreds of other prints there.

(11) Prosecution Evidence: The police found palm-prints on the rifle.

Any good lawyer would show that such prints are not legal evidence because there is not a sufficiently large stock of palm-prints to prove that no two are alike.

(12) Prosecution Evidence: Paraffin tests showed that there were traces of powder on Oswald's fingers, proving that he had discharged a gun.

Advocate Worman says that nine times out of ten such tests are inconclusive. Paraffin reveals the firing of a gun as much as six weeks beforehand.

(13) Prosecution Evidence: Marina Oswald stated that her husband owned a rifle, which could not be found in its usual hiding-place.

First of all, according to American law a wife cannot bear witness against her husband, even if she so wishes. This statement could therefore never be presented in

court. Further, Marina Oswald is not an arms expert, and to most women all guns look alike. How could she be certain it was her husband's? Perhaps Oswald had changed its hiding-place. And since the word "hiding-place" means what it does, he could deliberately not have told his wife where it was. Perhaps his rifle is still hidden there.

(14) Prosecution Evidence: Mrs Oswald has not defended her husband's innocence.

Mrs Oswald's first reaction when informed of the arrest of her husband was that he was innocent, but later she made conflicting statements. She may very well have hated her husband. Anyway, what weight can be given to the reactions of a woman brought up in a totalitarian country, whose home is brutally invaded by the police who sequester her for months?

(15) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald had bought a Carcano rifle.

Yes, but in Texas everyone buys rifles. Otherwise they wouldn't be sold wholesale, they wouldn't be advertised in the newspapers. Anyway, why didn't the police mention a *Carcano* rifle until three days later, after the F.B.I. had discovered an invoice for the despatch to Dallas of such a rifle?

(16) Prosecution Evidence: Oswald had ordered a rifle by post.

But under a false name. No one saw him take delivery of this rifle, no one saw him with it. The handwriting of the letter was disguised. Several handwriting experts have stated that it was in Oswald's handwriting but others have said that it was not. Anyway, when the rifle was ordered he could not have been meditating killing Kennedy with it because the President's tour in the South had not yet been decided upon. Why then use a false name? Oswald could have ordered the weapon for a friend, for an accomplice, to re-sell it, to export it to Mexico – and so on.

(17) Prosecution Evidence: There are witnesses who say they saw him at the window.

Impossible to recognise anyone at that distance.

(18) Prosecution Evidence: Documents and letters were seized from his home.

Such a seizure was illegal, being without a search warrant, and the documents could not have been admitted by the court.

OSWALD WAS not informed of his constitutional rights, he was not allowed to telephone a lawyer, or his family; no legal representative was assigned him. All this would certainly have led to a quashing of the trial by the Supreme Court.

Then there is the episode of the F.B.I. agent who in 1961 had suggested to Oswald that he should join the pro-Castro organisations and inform on them to him – Joseph Hesty – and through him to the F.B.I.

Why did the F.B.I., which had Oswald listed as “dangerous”, not inform the police and the Secret Service? For there are 250,000 schizophrenics on that list . . . therefore 250,000 persons just as much suspect as Oswald.

How COULD Oswald single-handed have managed to wound the President from the back in the nape of the neck, and from the front in the throat?

The doctors of Parkland Hospital are certain that there were two wounds, from opposite directions. –

“We have two hundred cases a day; we know when a bullet enters from in front and another from behind.” Their report was published in the *Texas Medical Journal*.

Tailor Zapruder’s film shows that Kennedy did not turn round; he could not in any case have turned round in such a way that a bullet fired from behind could enter the throat.

The autopsy performed at the Bethesda Military Hospital in Washington refers only to two bullets (apart from Governor Connally’s one) and to two wounds at the back. But after all the Dallas surgeons had had to do, the President’s body was surely in such a condition that no autopsy could give any clear picture of the points of entry and egress of the bullets.

Why is the existence of a fourth rifle bullet denied?

Detective Bill Walthers declares that he found it. He described to me himself how he found the bullet and a picture taken immediately after the shooting by a *Dallas Times* photographer shows this detective and a Secret Service man in the act of retrieving a bullet from the turf at the roadside.

A journalist of the *St Louis Post Dispatch* states that the windscreen of the presidential car was splintered by a bullet.

Why has the medical report from the Parkland Hospital never been taken into consideration?

FINALLY, WAS anyone from the Chicago or New York underworlds that day in Dallas? Those quarters had recently not been on the best of terms with the Kennedys: Bob, the brother, had started a crusade against the Mafia and other gangsters, giving rise to the spectacular revelations of Valachi.

Oswald’s mother, who is absolutely determined to maintain her son’s innocence, has made many contradictory and often ill-advised statements. But her recollections and the voluminous papers she has put at my disposal, suggest a theory which may be defended with some success:

“My son is the victim of a plot. A few minutes after his arrest, the police gave the press a mass of biographical detail in which everything detrimental was carefully underlined . . . How did it happen that the police had all this

information about my son ready to hand, when they say they didn't know he existed a few hours before?

"We are a patriotic family. All my three children volunteered for service in the armed forces. Lee wanted to enlist in the Marines at sixteen years old – he was rejected as being too young. But he was a member of the Cadet Aviation Corps, and they wanted to make him a pilot – the American Air Force doesn't normally recruit young people whose patriotism is in doubt. An officer often came to the house to talk to Lee. That's how he came to read *Das Kapital*; but at the same time he learned by heart the big wordy manual, *The Perfect Marine*. At seventeen, he enlisted, and his letters said he was happy. He was decorated. He did not receive a medal for being a sharp-shooter; it was his battalion which received that distinction . . . but the police and the press lied, making the world believe that my son was a champion rifle-shot.

"I am sure that the Marines trained Lee to be a secret agent. True, he did not tell me so, nor does anyone say so today. But since when did secret agents tell their mothers what they were doing? Or the secret services acknowledge their members?

"Lee was never in contact with Communists. If he became a Marxist, it was because the Marines made a Marxist of him . . .

"Lee decided all in a minute to go to Russia . . . as if he'd received an order. He, always so truthful with me, told me that he was going to get on a cargo-boat for Europe. How could he, in the two days he stayed with me after leaving the military base, have arranged so quickly to get a passport, a Soviet visa and a passage to Russia?

"Why did the Russians never believe in his story of defection? Why haven't the Soviet dossiers on my son, passed by Moscow to the American Government, been

made public? Why was Lee, after renouncing his nationality, so very much interested in keeping his status in the Marines; to such a point that he wrote a letter from Moscow to Governor Connally, asking him to annul his discharge from the Marines? A Communist ought not to have cared about defending his military prestige in one of the U.S. forces . . .

"After he came back, Lee kept away from me for a long time. He didn't want to compromise me. He was on secret work. I believe that Lee, as an agent, was trying to infiltrate reactionary circles in Texas, perhaps to uncover a plot against Kennedy. He was, then, the victim and not the instigator of the tragedy. He was used as a scapegoat. By whom? Those who had discovered his role?

"With the help of friends, I have made my own enquiries. I have discovered that the policeman, Tippitt, was seen in Ruby's night-club some days before the assassination. A witness of Tippitt's murder says that the killer was square-set, short, fat . . . that description does not fit my son. Another witness saw an unidentified man leave the Book Depository Building just after the assassination and go off in a car belonging to an extreme right-wing organisation.

"As a mother, I know that Lee did not commit murder. I know too that if he had done so, he would have boasted of it. Lee was always proud of his actions, and never denied his mistakes . . . He would have told me . . . His last words, when he said good-bye to his wife and me some hours before his cruel death, were, 'Don't forget to buy June some shoes . . .' Is that an assassin's good-bye?"

Lee Harvey Oswald a secret agent?

Why not? Couldn't he have been acting on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency? It isn't impossible that he was on the trail of the intending assassins. After all, Johnson's entourage, and the new President himself, did not exclude the possibility of a conspiracy in Dallas.

There are many unanswered questions. Why, for example, was the head of the C.I.A. closeted with Robert Kennedy, the Attorney-General, instead of running straight to the Pentagon, as was his duty? Why did he go to see Bob Kennedy, who had nothing to do with secret service matters? Wouldn't the logical answer be: "Because one of his agents had been mistakenly arrested in Dallas, and he was asking Bob Kennedy, head of the F.B.I., to get him out of the clutches of the Dallas police . . ."?

And why did Earl Warren, after studying secret documents, declare publicly: "Probably certain facts in this affair will never be made public in our generation." This was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the first magistrate, chairman of the nation's *ad hoc* Commission – and the man entrusted by President Johnson with the task of investigating the assassination.

ONLY THE future, then, will lift the veil from what really happened in Dallas on that unbelievable and unforgettable November 22nd, 1963.

It may confirm the convenient official version of the facts – just as much possible as a hundred others. Or it may, by revealing innumerable further contradictions, make even more mysterious what seems like the most far-fetched and thrilling "whodunit" of post-war years.